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THE STEWARD;

OR,

FASHION AND FEELING.

A Comedy,

IN FIVE ACTS.

ALTERED AND ADAPTED FROM THOS. HOLCROFT'S "DESERTED DAUGHTER,"

BY

SAMUEL BEAZLEY, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF HINTS FOR HUSBANDS, IS HE JEALOUS? LOTTERY
TICKET, KNIGHTS OF THE CROSS, BOARDING HOUSE,
SCAPEGRACE, ETC.

WITH

ORIGINAL CASTS, COSTUMES, AND THE WHOLE OF THE
STAGE BUSINESS.

BOSTON:

WILLIAM V. SPENCER,

128 WASHINGTON STREET. (CORNER OF WATER.)

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	<i>Orig. Casual Gar- den, London, 1819.</i>	<i>Haymarket, Lon- don, 1835.</i>	<i>Park, New York, 1828.</i>	<i>Warren, Boston, 1834.</i>	<i>Burton's, N. York, 1854.</i>	<i>Boston Theatre, 1856.</i>
MORDENT,.....	Mr. Macready	Mr. Wardo	Mr. T. Barry	Mr. Palmer	Mr. C. Fisher	Mr. Donaldson
CHEVERIL,.....	" Jones	" Vining	" E. Simpson	" F. S. Hill	" G. Jordan	" Bolton
LENNOX.....	" Conner	" Brindal	" P. Richings	" A. W. Fenno	" Marchant	" Cowell
ITEM, (the Steward,).....	" W. Farren	" W. Farren	" J. Barnes	" J. Barnes	" Burton	" John Gilbert
GRIM,.....	" Blanchard	" Strickland	" H. Placide	" Williams	" J. Moore	" W. H. Curtis
CLEM NT.....	" Abbott	" J. Webster	" Woodrull	" Maynard	" Cannoll	" Stoddart
JONATHAN WINTER,.....	" Emery	" Webster	" Hilson	" Blake	" Russell	" John Wood
LADY ANNE,.....	Mrs. Davison	Mrs. Faucit	Mrs. Barry	Mrs. Asbury	Mrs. Buckland	Mrs. H. Kirby
JOANNA,.....	Miss Foote	Miss Taylor	" Hilson	Miss Ophelia Pelby	" Burton	" Parrow
Mrs. SARNET,.....	Mrs. Gibbs	Mrs. Glover	" Hackett	" Kerr	" Holman	" John Wood
Mrs. PENTOLD,.....	Mrs. Green	" W. Daly	" Wheatley	Mrs. Nelson	" Cooke	" Bolton
BETTY,.....	Mrs. Sexton	" W. Johnson	" Godey	Miss Williams	Miss Florence

COSTUME.

MORDENT. — Fashionable suit of black; black silk stockings; shoes and buckles; opera hat.

CHEVERIL. — Fashionable brown coat; white waistcoat; white kersey-mere breeches; white silk stockings; shoes and buckles; opera hat.

LENNOX. — Fashionable blue coat, brass buttons; white kersey-mere breeches; white waistcoat; white silk stockings; shoes and buckles.

ITEM. — Old-fashioned dark-blue suit; black stockings; shoes, latches, and buckles; old man's hat; white cravat.

GRIME. — Old-fashioned dark-brown suit; black stockings; shoes and buckles; white cravat.

CLEMENT. — Blue surtout coat; white waistcoat and trousers.

JONATHAN WINTER. — Countryman's old-fashioned blue coat; flowered waistcoat; leather breeches; white cotton stockings; shoes and buckles.

LADY ANNE. — White satin train dress; white hat and ostrich feathers.

JOANNA. — *First Dress.* Elegant white sarsnet; pink sash. *Second Dress.* Blue surtout; white waistcoat; white hat; white trousers; Wellington boots.

Mrs. SARNET. — White muslin dress; black French apron; fashionable white muslin cap.

Mrs. PENTOLD. — Gray colored gown; cap; apron; kerchief.

BETTY. — Colored gown; cap; apron; kerchief.

THE STEWARD; OR, FASHION AND FEELING.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — *A Room in the House of Mr. MORDENT. Two chairs.*

Enter MORDENT and JONATHAN WINTER, in anger, R. H.

Win. (R.) Well, zur, it doan't signify nothing argufying the topic. Ize tell ye my mind. Discharge me, an you wull; I an't been more than thirty years in the family, 'tis true, but that's long enow to gain a settlement i' thirty parishes, though not, mayhap, in one heart; and if ye wull be guilty of foul deeds —

Mor. (C. *Looking anxiously round.*) Will you speak in a lower key? Recollect, Jonathan — recollect the consequences of discovery.

Win. I tell ye what wull be the consequences, if I doan't discover her. Ize advertise for her i' the public papers — ay, I wull. So, now, mak' up your mind to ha' your name imprinted at full length.

Mor. (*Terrified.*) Print my name?

Win. My name's not Winter, if I doan't.

Mor. Nay, nay, pray speak lower. Recollect, my wife is within hearing. The girl is safe, no doubt. You know I did not — I could not abandon her.

Win. I doan't know what great people may mean by abandon; but ye wad nae acknowledge her — wad nae see her; and wad ye ha' the heart now to expose her to — (*Holding up his hands in terror.*)

Mor. What?

Win. Tramp the streets, or, what is as bad, to the arts and wiles of old Item.

Mor. The arts of Item! What do ye mean?

Win. What do I mane? Why, I mane, that my mind misgi's me, and, if I see clear, some o' his devildom schemes do hang on the lass, that's all.

Mor. O, impossible! impossible!

Win. I tell ye, 'tis possible. And why should you desart her, forsooth? Because she is what 'em calls a natural child? Now, in my mind, to beget children, and then turn them adrift to beg, steal,

or starve, makes a father a deal more unnatural than the child. I doan't know what you may think, but that's my humble opinion.

Mor. Would you tell all the family? expose me to my wife?

Win. Ize expose ye tull the whole world if I doan't find her; though, the Lord knows, it woan't be much the better for her if I do; for it strikes me verry strongly ye are diced, and drabbed, and squandered, and mortgaged, till ye woan't scarce ha' change for a thin sixpence for yoursel.

Mor. This is too much. You forget your station.

Win. Forget my station! No, no, Maister Mordent; 'tish't Winter that forgets his station, when he warns you against the devildoms, as I call them, of that Belzebub steward. But tak' warning; I ha' toud ye long ago, and I tell ye again, he ain't a bit better nor a rascal.

Mor. 'Tis false! you mistake him, I tell you. If the earth hold an honest man, Mr. Item is he. In all my difficulties, where have I found assistance but from Item?

Win. Yes, he pretends to borrow the cash for ye, which he lends himself; and your wealthy possessions will soon be all his own.

Mor. Nay, nay; has he not ever dissuaded me, even in your presence, from the ruinous expedients which my necessities have obliged me to adopt?

Win. Yes; he ha' led ye to a precipice, which he bags ye woan't leap, while, at the same time, he pushes you down headlong.

Mor. I say 'tis false! His truth, integrity, and zeal are unexampled. (*Crosses to R. H.*)

Win. Mercy on us! ye're bewitched!

Mor. Winter, you drive me mad! What a den of misery is this world! swarming with one set of fiends, that raise the whirlwind of the passions, and with another, that beset and tantalize the bewildered wretch for having been overtaken by the storm!

Win. Poor Joanna! what can ha' become on her? But, now, remember, if I doan't find her, Ize keep my word.

Mor. As to Joanna, wait patiently; she's safe. I have done a violence to my own feelings as a father, in depriving her of the right of a child; but have I not fifty times descended to explanation, and shown you that I must not — cannot own her?

Win. Dare not, you mane. Ah, maister, maister! ye bogle at shadows.

Mor. Shadows! Winter, you know not what you say. The public clamor and disgrace attached to the discovery, the well-merited reproaches of Lady Anne, for the long concealment of such a circumstance, the resentment of her imperious family, — are these shadows?

Enter Mrs. SARNET, L.

Mrs. S. What is it you are pleased to be talking, pray, about my lady, Mr. Yorkshireman!

Win. Troth, I ha'n't a word to say against her, Mrs. Cockney.

Mrs. S. Against her! No, sir, my lady may defy her worst enemies, though there are folks who ought to adore the very ground she treads upon, that use her like a Turk.

Mr. How now, Sarsnet? Did your mistress bid you behave with impertinence?

Mrs. S. She, indeed! No, no; your example and commands have made her almost as great a rake as yourself; yet she'd never respect any thing of that kind, if I didn't put it into her head. She bid me always behave with affability and decorum; and so I would if I could. But it would provoke an angel!

Mr. And what is it your wisdom thinks so provoking?

Mrs. S. To see a sweet lady, that was made to live always in a family way, driven out for to seek for pleasures in routs and nonsense; and, when at home, to see her laugh, when she means to cry; then, when some folks are in sight, pretend to smile, and be all assignation and contentment, when, all the while, I know her poor heart is ready to break.

Mr. (*Sitting, R. C.*) Then she complains to you?

Mrs. S. (*L*) I said no such thing, sir. No, she complains to no Christian soul, more's the shame! I wish some folks had a little of my spirit; other folks, mayhap, mut find the difference.

Win. (*C.*) Spirit! Ecod, you needn't tell us o' that, Mrs. Sarsnet.

Mrs. S. A poor, weak woman, who can only take her own part by erylng and fainting.

Win. Crying and fainting! Come, come, Mrs. Sarsnet, there are some poor, weak women that ha' got tongues and nails, you know.

Mrs. S. Have they, Mr. Snapshort? Why, then, if I had you for a husband, mayhap I would go for to let you see that I could use them.

Win. I dare for to say as how you would — the devil doubt you!

Mrs. S. It's a shame. Mr. Winter, for you to be getting into corners, and to be a whispering, and a peering, and a plotting, to my lady's dishonor.

Win. (*Angrily.*) I plotting! Come, now, you'd better hold your tongue, Mrs. Sarsnet.

Mr. Silence with you both.

Mrs. S. You ought to be quite ashamed of making yourself a skipjack go-between.

Win. A skipjack! O, 'tis very well, Mrs. Sarsnet. You hear, sir, the thanks I get. Ye hear I am a go-between!

Mrs. S. Yes, yes; we know that very well, Mr. Winter.

Win. But I'm not sic a go-between as ye, Mrs. Malapert, may think me. No, no; I ha' been a trustworthy caterer to the family; (*to MORDENT.*) a slave to your and your lady's routs, and your superings, and your dinnerings! Ye may ha' made me your purveyor, but dom me if any mon ever yet made Jonathan Winter his pander!

Mr. Begone! See if Mr. Item is returned.

Mrs. S. Ah, there's another!

Win. Skipjack! go-between, forsooth! Ecod! if you war Mrs. Winter, I'd teach ye to keep a civil tongue in your teeth, ecod, I would! (*Exit, L.*)

Mr. (*Rising.*) Did your lady, I say, instruct you to behave with this insolence?

Mrs. S. You know very well, sir, that my lady is the most imprudent of wives, and would have been better than the best, if you had but let her have had her own way. She sent me on a civil message, and bid me speak with propriety; and so, if speaking one's mind, and telling the truth, be a fault, it's all my own.

Mor. I'll put an end to this.

Mrs. S. O, to be sure! You may tell my lady, and get me turned away, if you please; because I know very well, if you bid her, she will do it.

Mor. True; she has ever met my most capricious wishes with compliance; nay, in the instance of fashionable extravagance, to which I urged her from my foolish vanity, has outstripped them; and I — (*Aside.*) O, Prometheus and his vulture is no fable!

Mrs. S. Yes, yes; I know she will turn me away; but as it is all for pure love of my lady, I'm sure the Earl of Oldcrest, her father, will give me a situation. He knows, mayhap, more than you may go for to think; so does the viscount, her brother, too; her cousin, Lady Mary, and her uncle, the bishop; and every body is not obliged to be so blind, and so good tempered, and so replying as my lady, never to answer a word, indeed, as she never does.

Mor. Ah! what is it they know? — (*Aside.*) Can Winter have betrayed me?

Mrs. S. That's more than I can say; but they have all been here, and my lady desires to speak with you.

Mor. Indeed! Tell her I have no leisure — that I am particularly engaged. — (*Aside.*) I dare not see her!

Mrs. S. Ha! I told my lady so before I came.

Mor. Begone! Inform your lady that I will seek some other opportunity. — (*Aside.*) To what a state of wretchedness must that heart be reduced, which trembles at meeting the eye of her it loves! Cursed infatuation! to what hast thou driven me! (*Exit, R.*)

Mrs. S. I prognostified the answer; a good-for-nothing chap! I know as well as any body what is becoming of a husband. He should love his wife dearly, by day and by night; he should wait upon her, and give her her own way, and keep her from the cold and the wet, and provide her with every thing comfortable; and if she happen to be in an ill humor, should coax her, and bear a little snubbing patiently. Humph! the fellows! what are they good for else, I wonder? (*Exit, L.*)

SCENE II. — *The Steward's Room. Table and two chairs.*

Item discovered sitting at the table examining accounts, and putting away books.

Item. (*Laughing.*) Ha! ha! ha! 'tis well — very well! Nothing rejoices my heart so much as casting an account, when the balance is in my own favor. One more deed signed, and the proud Mr. Mordent is in my power! Till then, I must still smooth my brow; but once sure, once certain, *Item's* turn will come, and all his years of anx-

ious labor shall be repaid. And who can say it is not right that wisdom should thus thrive upon folly? (*Putting books on the table.*) You may lie there; you all bear fair faces, that may be perused by any one, and do not present one blot to make the most rigid inspector cavil at poor Item. But you, (*putting one book in his bosom,*) who contain the true account of all my honest and laborious gains, lay next my heart, that beats with pleasure while it hugs you. (*Hiding the book quickly.*) Ah! I hear somebody on the stairs.

Enter GRIME, L. II.

(*Eagerly.*) My dear Grime! I am glad you are come. Well, is the deed prepared?

Grime. Ready for sealing. Mr. Mordent never examines what he signs; he trusts all to you.

Item. We cannot be too safe. But this other affair — this Joanna? What have you done? Have you taken her to Mrs. Penfold's?

Grime. Really, Mr. Item, she is so fine a creature, that, when I deceived her, I am not a true Christian if I did not feel such a twinge here. (*Touching his breast.*)

Item. There! Why, what have you got there more than any where else? A twinge, indeed! Curse your twinges! Is she safe? Are you sure Winter suspects nothing?

Grime. No, no; I took care of that, and have made certain that she left no clew to her retreat.

Item. (*Joyfully.*) That is well — that is well! 'Twill do — 'twill do! And so she's a fine creature? Item, you're a lucky dog! My scheme succeeds in every point. And I say, Grime, the girl's handsome — is she?

Grime. Handsome! I can't say I'm a judge of beauty.

Item. Do her eyes sparkle, you old rogue?

Grime. Why, they do twinkle, to be sure.

Item. Has she roses, lilies, a fine neck, round arms, ——?

Grime. Yes, yes, roses in plenty. But I don't understand why Mr. Mordent wishes to put her out of the way.

Item. I dare say you don't, but I do. He has various tormentors; his wife, or, rather, her proud relations, are among the chief; and he dreads they should come to the knowledge of this secret. But his strongest terror is, of being detected in having for years disowned a child, who, if now produced, would be his everlasting disgrace.

Grime. Does he know that his daughter is now in the house of Mrs. Penfold?

Item. Not a word. His plan for the present is to settle her in some profession; for this he will bestow a thousand pounds, which I am to expend.

Grime. (*Significantly.*) Or keep.

Item. (*Aside.*) Plague! I have said too much!

Grime. (*Aside.*) O ho! a thousand pounds!

Item. That — that, my dear Grime, would be a paltry motive. I have others — others of more consequence, Grime.

Grime. (*Aside, r.*) I'll have my share!

Item. (c.) Mr. Mordent has been all his life squandering, like a blockhead, what I have been prudently picking up.

Grime. And pretty pickings you have had, Mr. Item.

Item. (*Exultingly.*) I have him in the toils! Interest accumulating upon interest, and all in arrear! I can foreclose upon him when I please for all, except the Berkshire estate; and by this second mortgage, agreeably to the deed you have brought, equity of redemption will be forfeited, and that, as well as the rest, will then be mine.

Grime. If he had but signed and sealed!

Item. Which he shall do this very day.

Grime. Then, what have you to fear from Joanna?

Item. Much — very much; an action of recovery.

Grime. How so? She has no title — she is illegitimate.

Item. No, no; a lawful daughter, born in wedlock; her mother poor, but virtuous, and died in childbed. Fearful it should injure his second marriage with Lady Anne, he never produced the infant, but told his man, Winter, it was a natural daughter, and by his intermission secretly maintained, and had her educated; and because this Winter has got the fool's disease, pity — pity! (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha! He loves the girl so much, that he has threatened to make Mordent own his daughter.

Grime. To prevent which, he has agreed —

Item. That I should place her out of Winter's reach. But he little thinks I intend to make him own her myself.

Grime. You!

Item. Yes, I. To prevent her claims from affecting my earnings, I intend to vest the power of recovery in myself.

Grime. As how?

Item. As how? By marrying her, to be sure.

Grime. By marrying her! You! (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha!

Item. Yes, by marrying her! — (*Aside.*) What the devil does the fellow laugh at? — (*To GRIME.*) Yes, by marrying her, Grime — by making her Mrs. Item. Ay, and I'll compel the proud Mr. Mordent, and Lady Anne, and her proud family, to own, ay, and court Mr. Item, as their relation, or Mr. Item will know the reason why.

Grime. Marry her! Well, well, 'tis a strange world! But now, Mr. Item, give me leave to say a word or two on my own affairs.

Item. To be sure, my dear friend; speak, and spare not.

Grime. There is a thousand pounds you mentioned.

Item. (*Aside.*) Hem!

Grime. Then the premium on this mortgage. In short, Mr. Item, I do all your business — stand in your shoes.

Item. You are my right hand — the apple of my eye! — (*Aside.*) A hypocritical rascal!

Grime. Ay, but —

Item. The dearest friend I have on earth! — (*Aside.*) I wish the earth covered him!

Grime. The division of profits —

Item. Don't mention it. Am I not your friend? I shall not live forever.

Grime. No, nor I neither. Friendship —

Item. Don't think of it. You can't distrust me, the first and best friend you ever had.

Grime. Fine words!

Item. (*Evasively.*) Yonder is my nephew. — (*Calling.*) Clement!

Enter CLEMENT, R.

Cle. Sir!

Item. Fetch the title deeds of the Berkshire estate from my good friend, Mr. Grime.

Grime. Well, but ——

Item. Any time to-day.

Cle. Very well, sir.

(*Exit, R.*)

Grime. Once again, Mr. Item ——

Item. (*Calling off, R.*) And, Clement!

Grime. I say, the division ——

Item. (*Listening.*) Hark! I hear Mr. Mordent.

Grime. (*Aside.*) It shall not pass off thus — I begin to know you.

Item. I would not have you seen just now, my dear Grime! my kind friend! Some other opportunity. Pray oblige me.

Grime. Well, well! — (*Aside.*) The next time we meet, you shall know more of my mind.

(*Exit, L.*)

Item. (*Angrily.*) The rascal begins to grow troublesome! — (*Speaking off, loudly, L.*) Take care of the steps, good Mr. Grime! —

(*In a subdued voice.*) I wish he'd break his neck! (*Exit, L.*)

SCENE III. — *The Dressing Room.*

Enter LADY ANNE and MRS. SARNET, R.

Lady A. (*L. C.*) Well, well, Sarnet, you have said enough about refusing to come, though, for the life of me, I can't see why he should thus avoid me.

Mrs. S. Ah, but I can guess, though. He's ashamed — he's ashamed of his neglects, and of his unpatrimonial and disconjugal behavior.

Lady A. Well, if any two people's follies ever kept each other in countenance, certainly these of my *caro-sposo* and myself ought to do it; and happy should that couple consider themselves, where the little extravaganees of the wife make her look with good temper on the dissipation of her husband; and, vice versa, when the consciousness of the husband makes him find an apology for the innocent gayeties of his wife! It is but a roundabout way, after all, of coming at the main point of matrimony — a quiet life. O Lord!

Mrs. S. A quiet life, indeed! And do you think one would marry only for to have a quiet life? No, indeed! I've no notion of a quiet life, not I, my lady; no more had your ladyship, till Mr. Mordent ——

Lady A. Stop, stop, my good Sarnet! Remember, it is a wife's privilege to hear nobody abuse her husband but herself.

Mrs. S. Well, I won't abuse him, though my tongue itches to call

him every bad name in the Roman calendar. But answer me one question, my lady : did you, on a cold, nipping night in November, order me to attend in my eanlet cloak and slippers, to meet Mr. Mordent, only to lead a quiet life after all ?

Lady A. (Hesitatingly.) Why, I did expect something more, to be sure ; but then, my good Sarsnet, those were our young days of romance and anticipation ; then my mind was warm with the overcharged description of love and marriage, which I had found in the circulating library ; and I pictured to myself a man at my feet for whole ages, without considering we might grow weary in the joints, from continuing in the same awkward posture, and that fashion had rendered conjugal attentions ridiculous. Heigh-ho !

Mrs. S. There, now, I declare you seythe at the very recollection of his drumstick duties, as you call them !

Lady A. Sigh ! — No, I didn't sigh, did I ? I'm sure I didn't intend it. (*Aside, with deep feeling, for a moment.*) At least, I should have thought that my sighs have been stifled so long, that they had forgotten the passage from my heart to my lips. (*Resuming her gay-ty.*) And why should I sigh ? The leader of fashion — the envy of my friends — riches in my hand, and pleasures at my command — uncontrolled mistress of my own actions, — what wish is there ungratified ? Am I like Lady Spendthrift — obliged to render up a quarterly account of every little expenditure on my person and pleasures, and doomed to a monthly quarrel upon paltry pounds, shillings, and pence ? Or does my fate resemble that of Mrs. Homely, who never dare stir a foot from her own threshold without telling the how, the why, and the wherefore, to her jealous-pated husband ? If my inclination led me to the farthest quarter of the globe, would Mr. Mordent's veto prevent my excursion ?

Mrs. S. O, no, indeed ; the farther the better, I dare say. He's always with his companions.

Lady A. And am I not always with mine ? If Mordent passes his time out, do I not see company at home ? If he takes his box of dice at Brookes's, have I not my box at the Opera ? If the knock which gains him admittance to his home does not thunder at the door till three, do not I prevent the noise from disturbing my rest by not returning till four ?

Mrs. S. Well, there is some pleasure in being even with a husband, to be sure. But I don't know ; I hate this yea and nay indifference ; — I'd rather see you in a passion, and a quandary, and all that ; and it would be better for you to meet every day, and quarrel every day, and make it up again every day, like other respectable married folks, than never meet at all.

Lady A. By the by, did he give no reason for refusing to come to me ?

Mrs. S. Reason, forsooth ! Husbands never have no reason. But they do say that he has lost a sum of money at play — at Pharo, or summat. I'm sure I wish Pharo had been drowned in the Red Sea, along with his namesake.

Lady A. His losses are nothing new : in gambling, as with matrimony, one must put up with Fortune in all the variety of her moods.

Mrs. S. Ay, but they do say that he is obliged to borrow at a million per cent.

Lady A. Well, then he'll pay it, and it will be over. — But what detained you so long on my message?

Mrs. S. Ay, ma'am, that's what I'm going to uncloset to you, for I'm sure there be other bad doings; and, seeing my master go into Mr. Item's room, I clapped my ear to the keyhole, and there I heard a whuz-buz.

Lady A. What! turn eavesdropper, Sarsnet? This was wrong.

Mrs. S. O, I dare for to say you think so; I'll be bound for it you never put your ear to your keyhole. But when some people won't let other people know the rights of a thing, why, I don't see, for my part, why a keyhole mayn't serve one's purpose to come at the truth. However, I could only catch up a word here and there; and the first was summat about a child.

Lady A. (*Anxiously.*) A child!

Mrs. S. And a mother, my lady; though, for the matter of that, where there is a child, one's own natural penetrality might tell one there was a mother.

Lady A. Well? (*Anxiously, yet repressing her curiosity.*) But no — don't tell me — I'll not hear a single word more, and command you to be silent.

Mrs. S. O, very well, ma'am; I'll be silent — I won't tell you a word about Mr. Item's fathering the child. (*Crossing to R.*)

Lady A. (*With hope and pleasure.*) O, then it was Mr. Item, after all?

Mrs. S. O, yes, ma'am, but that was all a flam; for my master immediately after exclaimed — (*Lady Anne listening anxiously.*) But I beg your pardon — I won't utter a single word more, as your ladyship desired.

Lady A. (*Pettishly.*) What did your master exclaim?

Mrs. S. Why, my lady, he called somebody a poor injurious girl, and a prodigality of wit and beauty; and then I heard somebody's feet on the stairs, and was fain for to scamper.

Lady A. (*Aside.*) A child! an injured girl! and I not know of it! How my heart beats! — (*Repressing her feelings.*) Why, one would suppose that I was an affectionate wife, instead of the fashionable and *nonchalante* Lady Anne Mordent! (*To Mrs. Sarsnet.*) Nonsense, child! you have been deceived!

Mrs. S. No, indeed; I had all my seven senses and my eye teeth about me; for you know, my lady, I love you in my heart and soul; and it is all for your own good that I wish to prove my master the worst husband in the world, just to spur you up to treating him as he deserves.

Lady A. (*After a pause.*) No, no — I don't believe it; upon that point he wouldn't — he couldn't deceive me. If it were so, he knows my heart is not so ungenerous but that he might have trusted me.

Mrs. S. Well, well, I'll rummage about, and find the particulars — shan't I, my lady?

Lady A. Why, if you can by chance — but, mind, without paying — no keyhole business; and then, if you can just learn — merely —

merely — whether you haven't mistaken the whole matter. In short, I am so convinced that you are wrong, that you had better convince yourself so ; for my own part, I am utterly careless about the matter. (*Suddenly assuming deep feeling.*) For 'tis so long since I have reposed my happiness upon affliction, that — (*Resuming her gaiety.*) But, Lord bless me ! I'm becoming sentimental, and shall be too late for a thousand calls I must make this morning. So, order the carriage to the door, that — that — that — (*aside, her feelings overpowering her as she is going out,*) — that I may lose my recollection in a round of unmeaning visits ! (*Exit, R.*)

Mrs. S. She may say what she will, but I know very well she is the most miserablest lady alive ; and I could tear his eyes out ! Husband, indeed ! And so, because I listened to the fellow's love and nonsense stuff, and took pity on him when he was going to hang or drown himself, he must think, as soon as he has got me safe, to be made my lord and master ! I'd tell him another story ! My lord and master, truly ! (*Exit, R.*)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *An Apartment at Mrs. PENFOLD'S. Two chairs.*

Enter LENNOX and Mrs. PENFOLD, R. H.

Len. But, my good Mrs. Penfold, do tell me who this divine creature is.

Mrs. P. That's more, Mr. Lennox, than I can tell.

Len. But how came she under your care ?

Mrs. P. That's more than I dare tell ; and, I can assure you, I shall get into a pretty scrape if it was known that you had even seen her.

Len. But that, you know, you could not help, since I caught a glimpse of her at the window ; what is more, I have often seen and often followed her, but could never before make out where she lived. Little did I think she was a *protégée* of my good old nurse's.

Mrs. P. Yes, yes ; your good old nurse might have waited long enough for a visit, if you had not seen a young girl at her window.

Len. Well, well, I am sorry you won't let me see her ; you are right, I dare say ; but I am wrong to neglect one to whom I owe so much as to my good nurse Penfold ; and I shall therefore redeem my character by visiting you much oftener than I have done. — (*Aside.*) Now to write to Mordent that I have discovered my incognita, and make him assist me in getting her into my power. He is under too many obligations to me to refuse. So, farewell, Mrs. Penfold.

(*Exit, L.*)

Mrs. P. Ah, ah, Master Lennox, you're a sly one, though I nursed

you myself; and I fear my cousin Item would stand little chance by your side. But what can have come to my old avaricious relation, who, till now, has ever made money his god? Here he commissions me to praise him to her, and inspire her with favorable sentiments of him. There's some mystery in all this, which I cannot fathom. (*Looking off, R.*) Ah, she comes!

Enter JOANNA, R.

Well, my sweet Joanna! but why so melancholy? I left you just now all life and spirits.

Joa. (R. c.) True, madam; nature has blessed me with spirits to smile in the face of misfortune; yet, sometimes, the bitter remembrance that I am disowned by my father — that there is no hope that these lips will ever meet a parent's kiss, or this head receive a parent's blessing — will call a tear into my eye, and make my smiles appear traitors to the feelings of my heart.

Mrs. P. (c.) Come, come; forget such unpleasant thoughts: what should you care for one who never cared for you?

Joa. Ah! you have never known the want of a parent's smile; you were never abandoned; you knew your father. I never saw mine — do not even know his name. I had a strange desire to see him once, and I was denied. I am a high-spirited girl, but I would have knelt to him — would have kissed his feet — and was refused. No matter. (*Dashing the tears from her eyes.*) I know it is ungrateful to meet your kindness with tears; so thus I will dash them off, and try to resume my smiles.

Mrs. P. That's right — that's right! Be cheerful, since you are placed here by a person who is very capable of making you independent of this father, who deserts you.

Joa. There is only one way, madam, in which I wish to be independent, and that is, by the exertion of the talents nature has blessed me with. It was the hope of this which induced me to fly from the pittance my unkind father allowed me. The bread that was not sanctioned by his affection I disdained to eat. But come, set me to work, and you shall see that the lark shall not carol his morning song more blithely than Joanna. (*A knocking at the door, L.*) Hark! somebody is coming; I had better retire.

Mrs. P. Do so: should it be the kind gentleman who interests himself in your fate, I will call you. There, go, and wipe away the traces of your tears.

Joa. I will, ma'am; you are very good, and I will do my best to repay your goodness with smiles. (*Exit, R.*)

Mrs. P. I'm glad she's gone, for it may be that rake, Mr. Lennox, again; and if cousin Item were to find any body had seen her, he'd stop the paltry stipend he allows me, and so often taunts me with. (*Looking off, L.*) Ah, no — 'tis Mr. Item himself.

Enter ITEM, L.

Well, cousin Item —

Item. Well, Mrs. Penfold. But, since you receive the substantial

benefit of our relationship in the annuity which my kindness allows you, I must beg you will dispense with the nominal one of calling me cousin — Mr. Item, if you please. — (*Aside.*) I hope the vulgar wretch hasn't told Joanna she's my cousin!

Mrs. P. Well, well, cousin — Mr. Item, I mean — I will mind for the future. — (*Aside.*) A purse-proud fellow!

Item. Well, is Joanna secure? is she safe?

Mrs. P. Quite; and I have followed your directions in every particular.

Item. That's right. Then she has seen nobody, and is prepared to receive me as her sole protector?

Mrs. P. Protector! — Lord bless me! I hope you don't mean any wickedness by the young creature.

Item. Wickedness! eh? (*Laughing, and aside.*) He, he, he! — What does the old fool mean? — (*To Mrs. Penfold.*) No, no — her legal protector. Have ye done as I bid you?

Mrs. P. O, yes; believe me, my tongue has not been silent in your praises.

Item. Mrs. Penfold, you are a very sensible woman; and if you pursue my instructions implicitly in this business, the day that makes Joanna Mrs. Item, I will pay you a quarter's annuity in advance.

Mrs. P. Mrs. Item! — So, so; I thought something was in the wind, by your eyes sparkling so.

Item. Do they sparkle? — That's fortunate! there may be use for them. I say, we shan't make an unseemly couple, shall we? But I'm impatient; fetch the girl — I must lose no time.

Mrs. P. (*Aside.*) No, you can't afford it, indeed.

Item. What's that you say, Mrs. Penfold?

Mrs. P. That time is too precious to be thrown away, cousin Item. (*Exit, R.*)

Item. Mr. Item, if you please, Mrs. Penfold. Well, now Joanna is in my power, and I am going to commit that which I have ever denominated a sovereign folly — matrimony. But with me 'tis wisdom — 'tis a union of interests — the climax to my success. (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha! 'Tisn't love and nonsense; and yet the idea that she's a fine girl has given me a sensation here, that — that — my other sensations don't know what to make of. But suppose she should refuse me? Pshaw! I shall make it her interest to accept me, and that's enough; besides, she does not know that she is an heiress. (*Looking off, R.*) Ah, ah! she's coming — a fine girl, indeed!

ReEnter JOANNA, R.

Joa. (*Courtesying.*) I attend your pleasure, sir.

Item. (*Aside.*) I'faith! if I look long, I shall forget the Berkshire estate, and the action of recovery into the bargain. — (*To JOANNA.*) Madam — miss — I mean — I — I — that is — (*Aside.*) Lord bless me! what's the matter? Pooh! pooh! — Item, you are a fool! — (*To JOANNA.*) You are welcome, my pretty lass. Mrs. Penfold has informed you of the interest I take in your welfare — eh? and how good I've been, and how good I intend to be to you — eh?

Joa. Mrs. Penfold has informed me of your goodness, and I beg you to accept the warmest thanks of a grateful heart.

Item. (*Aside.*) I'faith, she's charming!

Joa. But, sir, there is yet one favor that would outdo all the rest.

Item. A favor! — What is it, my sweet girl?

Joa. Tell me who is my father — lead me to his feet — let me once receive a parent's blessing!

Item. To your father! No, that is impossible: he has a wife who would spurn you. 'Twas his unkindness that first interested me in your favor; I tried to make him own and receive you; and his harsh expressions of the trouble and expense you were to him made me determine to render you independent of him.

Joa. Trouble! expense! — Sir, you have indeed conferred an obligation on me. Mistaken parent! it was not thy fortune, but thy affections, Joanna coveted! But your goodness mentioned independence: there is but one way to win it, — let me work — I will labor cheerfully.

Item. Work! labor! No, no — such hands as those were never intended to work; such eyes as those are fit for other purposes than following a needle through cambric muslin. Work, indeed! (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha!

Joa. (*Aside.*) What can he mean? Surely, the old gentleman is not in love with me!

Item. Come, my pretty Joanna, let us sit down a little, and talk over your affairs. (*They sit.*) I have a great deal to say to you, though, i'faith! when I look in thy pretty eyes, it seems all to run out of my head.

Joa. (*With simplicity.*) You had better look the other way, then, sir.

Item. But I can't — I can't; they are the loadstone, and my heart is the needle. I dare swear, now, you have had plenty of lovers.

Joa. Lovers, sir!

Item. Ay, young whipper-snappers, that did not know their own minds. But be careful of them; they don't know what they're at — there's no dependence upon them; no, no; you must look to those who are a little older, who are grown steady, and know what they are about; a man about my age, for instance.

Joa. About your age, sir!

Item. Ay, my pretty Joanna. Do you think you could love me?

Joa. I could love every one who was kind to me.

Item. Every one! — Lord bless me! that would not do at all. Ay, but do you think you could love me? answer me that.

Joa. If you were kind to me, yes.

Item. There's a good girl.

Joa. I could love you as a father.

Item. (*Starting.*) A father! — Pshaw! I don't mean that. A father, indeed! But tell me now, Joanna, did you ever love any body in any other way?

Joa. O, yes, one person I love very much.

Item. One! — (*Aside.*) I begin to be alarmed. — (*To JOANNA.*) O! a lady, I suppose.

Joa. No — a man.

Item. A man !

Joa. As kind-hearted a one as nature ever formed.

Item. And who was he, pray ? How did you become acquainted with him ? I understood you had never seen any body. What was his name ?

Joa. Old Mr. Winter.

Item. Winter ! — (*Aside, laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha ! — There's not much fear of him. I began to be afraid, though. — (*To JOANNA.*) And I dare say the old lady you lived with used to warn you against the arts of us men — used to say we were gay deceivers, and meant nothing but wickedness, eh ? and all that, eh ?

Joa. No, sir, I do not recollect ever being warned, except against the arts of one man, who, I was told, would ruin me if he could.

Item. And who was he, my pretty Joanna ? I have no doubt your warning was a right one. Who was this one man who would have ruined you ? A wicked dog, I'll be bound.

Joa. It was one Mr. Item.

Item. (*Starting from her.*) I — I — I — Item !

Joa. I understand he has been the bane of my poor father, who has, for years, been deceived by him, till he has nearly robbed him of all his wealth. I heard, too, he had designs upon me ; but you will protect me from him.

Item. And who told you this ?

Joa. Winter — the faithful Winter.

Item. (*Aside.*) Curse him !

Joa. You seem agitated. Surely, under your protection, I shall be safe from this bad man !

Item. Safe ! pooh, pooh ! — (*Aside.*) He shall trot back to the West Riding as barefoot as he came for this ! (*To JOANNA.*) You mustn't believe this Winter — he's a fool ; he has deceived you ; 'tis he himself that would hurt you — (*Aside.*) I'll make the Yorkshire rascal pay for this ! — (*To JOANNA.*) Don't believe him, Joanna — you mustn't believe him. — (*Aside.*) I am too much in a passion to do any good with her now. — (*To JOANNA.*) There, my Joanna, go to your room ; I will do every thing that is best for you.

Joa. Thank ye, sir. — (*Aside.*) This is very strange — I do not understand it ; but the more I look at and hear of this old gentleman, the less I like him. (*Exit, R.*)

Item. Warned against me, and by Winter, too ! But I won't be circumvented ; Mrs. Penfold shall remove this bad impression. Her beauty has given a double incentive to interest ; and force or cunning shall accomplish all my schemes. (*Going — returns.*) No, no : prudence, prudence ! (*Exit, L.*)

SCENE II. — *An Anti-Chamber in the House of MORDENT. Two chairs.*

Enter MORDENT and CHEVERIL, R. H.

Che. (c.) Grumble no more, guardy ; have done with prognosti-

eating evil: 'tis all in vain. Your gloomy reign is ended: fun, frolic, dash, and adventure begin. I am at liberty!

Mor. (L. c.) Yes, to play the fool!

Che. I'm free — I'm alive — I'm beginning to exist!

Mor. Like a wretch at the stake, when the flames first reach him!

Che. The whole world is before me; its pleasures are spread out, and I long to fall on; the golden apples of delight hang inviting me to pluck, eat, and —

Mor. Be poisoned!

Che. (Laughing.) Ha, ha, ha!

Mor. As your guardian, I —

Che. Curse guardianship! I have been guarded too long!

Mor. You are a lunatic!

Che. No, I am just come to my senses; for I am just come to my estate, high health, high spirits, eight thousand a year, and one and twenty!

Mor. Youth! riches! Poor idiot! Health, too? What is man but a walking hospital? You, boy, you — little as you suspect it — include within yourself a whole pharmacopœia of malady and mischief.

Che. Zounds! He'll persuade me presently I am Pandora's box!

Mor. So you are.

Che. Why, guardy, you are mad!

Mor. True, or I should take the shortest way to get rid of misery, and instantly go hang myself, and quit a world where wretchedness walks at noonday, where pleasure leads but to pain, and man lives but to prey upon his fellow!

Che. What a picture!

Mor. Equal it in accuracy, if you can.

Che. Why, I am but a young artist; however, I can dash my brush at the canvas as daringly as you have done. So what think you (*rapturously*) of mirth, songs, and smiles? youth, beauty, and kisses? friendship, liberty, and love, with a large, capacious soul of benevolence that can soothe the afflicted, succor the poor, heal the sick, instruct the ignorant, honor the wise, reform the bad, adore the good, and hug genius and virtue to the heart? (*Crossing to L.*)

Mor. Every feature false!

Che. Curse me! but I say the likeness is, at least, as good as yours; and I am sure the coloring is infinitely more delightful.

Enter JONATHAN WINTER, R.

Win. Ize ganging about the business of the poor lass; so if ye happen to want me, Ize be back in a blink.

Mor. Go where you will, so that you do not torment me.

Che. Ha! old Winter, my boy! Don't you know that I'm of age? We'll make your old heart warm in spite of the frost on your brow. We'll have all spring, summer, and sunshine. Won't we, old Winter? Why do you look so glum, old Honesty?

Win. Old Honesty! Ecod! Ye mistake the matter, young gentleman: I am an old go-between.

Che. (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha!

Win. O, you may laugh! but it's varra true, and I begin to feel it. A helpless child has been east upo' the wide, wide world by a hairless fayther, and I am a part o' the cause.

Mor. How dare ye, sir —

Che. A child deserted by the father!

Win. Ay, ye may well show the white of your eyes; but it's true, for all that.

Che. Is he poor? Is he penniless?

Win. Ecod! you've pratty nearly hit the mark, if Jonathan Winter baint cursedly mistaken.

Che. Bring the child to me — bring it to me, old rueful: I'll be its father. I never fathered a child in my life — I long to begin.

Win. Why, ye seem to ha' a little more human affection than some faythers.

Mor. Begone! Leave us, Winter, as you value my favor!

Win. Yes; I'll go where I towed ye; and if I doan't hear of her, ye'ze hear o' me: that's all. (*Exit, L.*)

Che. Bring me the baby, Winter. Zounds! how it would delight me to father all the fatherless children in the world! Poor little dears! I should have a plentiful brood. And so, guardian, I want money.

Mor. What! To purchase destruction wholesale?

Che. I have five hundred good, wickied, spirited, famous projects on hand. You have seventeen thousand pounds of mine, hard cash — I want it.

Mor. Seventeen thousand plagues!

Che. Every farthing.

Mor. Your money, sir, is locked up in mortgages.

Che. Locked up! O, damn me! I'll unlock it! I'll send honest Grime to ye: he carries a master key.

Mor. Have you no regard to my convenience?

Che. I'll pay the premium; and if you want security, you may have mine. I must have money: 'tis the source of frolic, pleasure, and notoriety. The world must see me, hear of me, talk of me! I'll be a patron, and a subscriber, and a collector, and an amateur, and a connoisseur, and a dilettante! I'll hunt, I'll race, I'll dice, I'll grub, plant, plan, and improve! I'll buy a stud, sell a forest, build a palace, and pull down a church! That's the way to make use of eight thousand a year, my moody guardian! (*Exit, L.*)

Mor. (*Calling.*) Mr. Cheveril! He is flown! Why, ay, with spirits equally wild, wanton, and ignorant of evil, I began my career. I have now lived long enough to discover that universal nature is universal agony. O, this rejected Joanna! — miserable girl! Well, am not I miserable too? Who is not? The dangers to which she may be exposed! the cruelty of utterly abandoning her! Never shall I again be at peace with myself!

Lady A. (*Without, R.*) Where is your master?

Mor. Hark! my wife! I must away. I can't endure to see her, while I feel that the next moment may plunge her in the pit I have dug for her! (*Exit, L.*)

Enter LADY ANNE, R.

Lady A. Mr. Mordent! So, so, he again avoids me! Upon my word, this moody lord of mine is abominably provoking! (*Angrily.*) But no matter. He has taught me his own indifference, (*feelingly,*) at least he shall teach it me; and I care not if we never have another conjugal tête-à-tête as long as we live. Yet why will he not let me inquire into the truths of reports, which one would suppose must concern his peace as well as my own? And why, I may ask myself, why and wherefore till doomsday without getting any answer, or being able to conjecture the truth? So I may as well pursue my own career of pleasure, and still drown all the recollection of my better feeling and my early anticipating in the bustle and gayety of society. O Mordent! Mordent! why have you driven me to such resources?

Mrs. S. (*Without, L.*) I tell you I can't stay.

Lady A. The stories, too, with which this kind but officious creature torments me, and which her length of service gives her the privilege of telling me!

Enter MRS. SARNET, hastily, L.

Mrs. S. I've got it, my lady, — I've got it!

Lady A. And what, pray, have you got now? Some new report, or merely a repetition of the old one?

Mrs. S. Why, I'll tell your ladyship. A queer quandary kind of person brought my master a letter, which I knew was auspicious. So, ma'am, I watched him when he went for to read it, and then he put it in his coat pocket, ma'am. So my master's coat was all powder — over here. (*Significantly.*) How he came by it, I don't know.

Lady A. Well, well; don't tease me about it! What have I to do with your master's letters?

Mrs. S. So, my lady, he took it off, and ordered one of the fellows to give it a brush; so, making a pretence, I was close at his heels —

Lady A. At whose heels?

Mrs. S. The footman's, my lady. So, while he was brushing, he had a wranglation with the cook, and turned about to gabble footman's gibberish with she. So I, having a hawk's eye, twirled my hand behind me — so, and felt in the pocket; and there I found this written letter, which I slyly slipped under my apron. So —

Lady A. Take a letter out of your master's pocket?

Mrs. S. Yes, my lady. And so, being broke open, I read the contents, and found that it was from Mr. Lennox, ma'am, and all about master and a young girl. O! that Mr. Lennox leads my master into all kinds of mischief!

Lady A. A letter! A confirmation, perhaps — I shall betray myself. Give it me. Sarnet, you have done wrong. To have robbed your master of his money would have been less culpable than to steal from him the knowledge of transactions which he does not wish to avow.

Mrs. S. (*Whimpering, and with tokens of great affection.*) It's very hard, because I can't bear your lady — ladyship's ill usage, and

— and — and always feel as if my very stays were a-bursting, to see your — your treatment, time after time — that I should get myself ill — ill — ill will, because I love you from the very bottom of my heart!

Lady A. You have indulged yourself in these liberties too often; you presume on the length of your service, and upon the familiarities I have so long found an apology for in your attachment; but I'll suffer it no longer.

Mrs. S. Very — very well, my lady. I'll be deaf, and dumb, and blind; and when I see you treated worse than a Belsavage, I'll burst twenty laces a day before I'll speak a word!

Lady A. (*With great kindness*) What you have done has been affectionately meant; and I am sorry to have given you pain.

Mrs. S. (*Catching and kissing her hand.*) You are the tenderest and best of ladies; and I know who is an unfeeling brute!

Lady A. I must rid myself of the letter as fast as I can, lest the temptation should be too great, and I verify the character of my sex, excite the anger of my Blue Beard, and become, like Fatima, the victim of my curiosity. (*Exit, R.*)

Mrs. S. Blue Beard, indeed!

Enter LENNOX and CHEVERIL, L.

Len. Pray, Mrs. Sarsnet, is Mr. Mordent within?

Mrs. S. Indeed, sir, I don't know. (*Exit, muttering, R.*)

Len. (*c.*) I'll bet you a thousand, Cheveril, your charmer does not equal the girl I have this moment left.

Che. (*L. c.*) Done, for ten thousand!

Len. You would lose.

Che. You never beheld so peerless a beauty.

Len. How did you become acquainted with her?

Che. We are not yet acquainted, (*sighing*;) and I begin to fear we never shall be!

Len. O! O!

Che. I met her three times in the Green Park. The first moment I gazed at her with admiration; as soon as she was gone by —

Len. Gone by?

Che. No, she's not gone by; but good manners, you know, would not let me stare her in the face. Such a shape! such elegance! The next time I determined to speak to her, and approached as resolutely as Hercules to the hydra.

Len. A good simile for a beauty!

Che. I had studied a speech; but, somehow, there was such a sweet severity in her looks, I — I had not the power to utter a word.

Len. Courageous lover!

Che. The third time, however, it being a little darker, — for it was always in the evening, — I was more undaunted; so, fully determined to throw myself at her feet and declare my passion, up I marched; but, as the devil would have it, she turned and looked me full in the face; and — and virtue — and — and modesty, ever so awful — that my heart sunk within me.

Len. (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha!

Che. It is now a fortnight since ; and though I have walked the Green Park morning, noon, and night, every day, I could never once again set eyes on her. Intolerable booby that I was, to lose three such precious opportunities —

Len. Of making love to a lady's maid !

Che. A lady's maid ! Damn it, sir ! she's no maid ! she's the lady herself, I'll be sworn ! O for one momentary glance that might give vent to the passion that devours me !

Len. (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha !

Che. What ! You think I dare not ?

Len. (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha ! Look you, Cheveril, I know you. A lighted match and the mouth of cannon could not cow you like the approach of a petticoat.

Che. I — afraid of women ! Damme ! I don't understand having my character attacked and traduced ! Make a Master Jackey of me ? I am a wicked one !

Len. (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha ! Wicked ! You are as conscientious as a drunken Methodist, or as a dying miser ! You are not only afraid of the women, but of the sin !

Che. Why, if — No, damme ! 'tis not true ! I have no more conscience than yourself.

Len. Me ! I have a deal of conscience. Pleasure, I own, can tempt me ; but I make no pretensions, like you, to sin for the sake of reputation.

Che. Sir, I make no such pretension. I am, indeed, resolved to be a fellow of enterprise, pith, and soul ; but not by vile, rascally methods. I'll love all the women — that's but natural ; and, perhaps, trick some of the men — that's all fair ; but not seduce wives, ruin daughters, and murder husbands and fathers. No, no ; I don't go so far as that — no : if I cannot be wicked without being criminal, why, I'll live and die an honest, dull dog, and leave all my fortune to found a lying-in hospital, for the benefit of the rising generation !

(*Exeunt, L.*)

Enter MORDENT, L. S. E.

Mor. (*Searching his pockets.*) Curse the letter ! 'tis gone ! Careless booby ! A thousand to one but it falls into the hands of Lady Anne ; and the officious impertinence of her waiting woman will attribute the gallantry Lennox writes about to me.

Enter LADY ANNE, R.

Ah ! she's here ! (*Retiring.*) I dare not be with her alone — I dare not confess my ruin to her, or stop the extravagant habits I have myself urged her to adopt.

Lady A. Mr. Mordent ! Mr. Mordent ! (*Catching hold of his arm.*) Nay, nay, you shall give me a few moments, now I have so fairly caught you. Why, one would swear that our matrimonial life at home was a game of hide and seek, (*feelingly,*) only that all the seeking is on my side. And one would really suppose, in our wanderings abroad, that we studied the map of London only to go different ways.

Mor. Mirth, madam, is not in unison with my present feelings.

Lady A. Nay, nay, was there ever a time that Mordent could not make me what he pleased? He found me a simple-hearted maiden at eighteen, and made me a fond, affectionate wife at twenty. He thought my manners too rustic, my taste too domestic, my pursuits too confined; he enlarged my sphere of action, remodelled my disposition, taught me to seek society, and made the moral Lady Anne Oldcrest the dashing and fashionable Lady Anne Mordent. Is there any thing else I can do to oblige him? You were displeased that I never went to parties. Now, there is not one to which Lady Anne Mordent's name does not give distinction in the fashionable corner of the Morning Post. You laughed at my disinclination for play. I have corrected my error, and can display as proper a spirit at the whist table as the highest titled of my competitors.

Mor. (*Aside.*) Distraction! she hastens my ruin by complying with my foolish wishes! — (*To LADY ANNE.*) Madam, if you sought an interview only for the purpose —

Lady A. Why, if I did not seek it for the purpose, I am afraid you would prevent its happening by accident. So now, my good moody lord, be civil, and not captious, or I'll bring you on your knees in a moment. (*Showing a letter, playfully.*) Look at this, traitor!

Mor. Ah! Lennox's letter, which you have doubtless read, and attributed the contents to me, and come to upbraid me with your suspicions!

Lady A. (*Seriously and proudly.*) You do me wrong. It fell into my hands by the reprehensible but unauthorized curiosity of my woman. I have flown to you with it unopened, as she gave it me. That I intended to have teased you a little maliciously about it, I confess. Your reproaching me seriously with the baseness of having read it, and with an intention to upbraid and suspect you, has driven this childish idea from my wishes. There, sir, is your letter, unread by me. However I may have lost your affections, I will still preserve your respect.

Mor. Affections! — They are dead — swallowed up in the same vortex which has hurried me to perdition! Why do ye not reproach me with neglect?

Lady A. (*With feeling.*) Because I am proud enough to bear it with indifference. But, come, confide once more in me.

Mor. (*Aside.*) Confide in her! tell her how poor I have made her, and repose upon that heart which I shall render wretched! — (*To LADY ANNE.*) No, no, it is impossible: I know and feel that your heart is reproaching me, though your lip may be silent. That silence my imagination, perhaps jaundiced, construes into insult: but beware, Lady Anne, how you expose me to your imperious family!

Lady A. I do not — indeed I do not.

Mor. Why, then, are these family consultations?

Lady A. They are contrary to my wish.

Mor. A separation, I hear, is the subject of them; and, perhaps, it is the best thing for both of us.

Lady A. (*Piqued.*) O, I have no doubt you think so; though,

upon my word, no formal process of law can occasion a much greater separation than we enjoy — at present.

Mor. What would you say if I declared my fortune to be lost, squandered, wrecked?

Lady A. Why, perhaps, in such a case, I might exclaim, that as I had helped to squander it, I might help to redeem it; and that Mordent has it still in his power to make me an affectionate wife in poverty, as he has made me a fashionable one in his affluence. (*Playfully.*) But I see you are only trying me, though I vow, for the moment, you made me feel seriously, and that I know to be quite out of your code for the conduct of the wife of the fashionable Mr. Mordent. So, to redeem my character, and not lose my place in the Morning Post, I am off for my evening round of visits. I dine at Lady Linger's, drop in for Tramazzani's Aria at the Opera, play for half an hour at Lady Scarecrow's, squeeze through the Marchioness of Stifle-friend's rout, dance a quadrille at Mrs. Somerset's, and sup at Lady Allnight's. So, my good moody lord, you now know (*sighing*) exactly where you may go without the unfashionable risk of encountering your wife. (*Exit, R.*)

Mor. Hated — hated vice! what an angel hast thou lost me!

Enter LENNOX, L.

Len. Have you got my letter?

Mor. O, yes, yes — I've got it; and my wife has had it.

Len. Your wife?

Mor. Yes, yes; but talk not of her — to think of her is distraction. What is it you want?

Len. I have discovered my charmer, and I want your assistance to —

Mor. Destroy her! is it not so? When destruction is your object, you think, perhaps, you cannot apply to a better source.

Len. Destroy her! No; to make her happy: if I can at all judge from appearances, she is not so at present. I cannot get an interview with her; she is at my old nurse Penfold's, whom I shrewdly suspect to be keeping her for some sly purpose of her own. But come, Mordent, where's the alacrity you promised, should I ever need your assistance? Do ye so soon forget —

Mor. That I am in your debt? O, no, no! You say she is lovely — perhaps innocent.

Len. For the first I answer; upon the latter score, one can never be certain. But come, man, shake off your scruples; you know me too well to suppose I should use any girl ill; — so your advice and assistance I must have.

Enter JONATHAN WINTER, in great agitation, L.

Win. She is gone! she's gone! she is lost forever!

Mor. (*Aside to WINTER.*) How now, herald of malice and mischief?

Win. O, ye may talk and scold, but I can't forget her. Mayhap I shall never set eyes on her pratty face again.

Mor. Peace, I say!

Win. Peace! How can you expect it? how can ye dare to hope for it? O, ye may call me names, an' you wull; Ize spake my mind. A fayther turn his back on his child! But she left a message for ye.

Mor. (*Anxiously.*) What message?

Win. Tell him, if he woan't gie his child ane kiss, ane little blessing, that child will wark, starve, and die, ere she wull live like a parish pauper on scraps and alms; tell him she has a prideful spirit, that doan't care to beg what she can't win; and if he scorn to acknowledge his daughter, why, she scorns to accept his charity. That's her message to ye. (*Going, but returns.*) But I'll set the whole town ater her but what I'll find her; and I'd make you look ater her yoursen, but that ye doan't know the face of your own childe.

Len. How?

Win. It be true as you stands there, Maister Lennox: he never saw the face o' her sin' she were a foot long. But 'tis all very well; nothing comes more surely to light than that which is long hidden; an ill life, an ill end. (*Exit, R.*)

Mor. Wolves, tigers, serpents, were first created, and then man!

Len. You are truly a high fellow, Mordent; you spend your fortune, deceive your wife, and disown your child! That is, you inflict misery, and then tell us all you are miserable.

Mor. I act and am acted upon: the precept and the proof go together.

Len. You are incorrigible. But come, we must about this business; my heart is deeply interested.

Mor. My affairs are at a crisis; and, if I augur rightly, it will soon be all over with me.

Len. Hope better; come with me.

Mor. With you — with any one. My own thoughts are hateful to me. Lead me where you will; teach me to forget myself!

(*Exeunt, L.*)

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I. — *A Chamber in the House of Mordent. Two chairs.*

Enter MORDENT, R.

Mor. The crisis of my fate is come; I seem fairly hurled into the toils, and my pursuer is waiting to seize upon his prey. This cursed deed, which gives the power to ruin me beyond redemption, is ready for my signature; but the plunge must be made; it places at least some little time between me and destruction, and is my last resource. This poor deserted Joanna, too, preys upon my mind, and adds venom to the stings of my remorse. Forsaken as she is, she, too, may become the prey of some designing Lennox. And I have promised him assistance in his pursuit. Yet, if it be innocence he means to destroy,

I will recall my promise ; I will warn her of her danger ; for, in my own wreck, I will not pull down the happiness and innocence of another.

Enter CLEMENT, L.

Cle. My uncle desires me to inform you, sir, that he has examined the deed, and it is ready for signing.

Mor. I am coming.

Cle. Had I but any influence with you, sir, I would entreat — I would conjure you not to execute it, sir.

Mor. (*Sitting, R. c.*) Why ?

Cle. A sudden demand may be made by the first mortgagee ; you may be unprovided for payment ; equity of redemption will be forfeited ; he will foreclose, and the estate will be his at a valuation made fifty years ago — less than half its present worth.

Mor. (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha ! — 'Twill become his encumbrance, as it has been mine.

Cle. Money lenders neglect no advantage.

Mor. And as for conscience or honor —

Cle. Some of them, I am afraid, sir, have very little of either.

Mor. 'Tis in the order of things. Your uncle, indeed, is a man of integrity ; he knows them to be rogues, and warns me of them.

Cle. Sir, he — I — he may be a mistaken man, like others. I once again conjure you, sir, to reconsider the consequence ; it is a very serious affair.

Mor. Mr. Clement, you are young ; you cherish the fond hope of alleviating misery. Ah !

Cle. Sir, I — my situation is a painful one ; but every feeling of honesty and duty compels me to inform you, that, when once you have signed this, you will be wholly in the grasp of mercenary men, who will pay no respect to former profits, the benefits they have received, or the feelings and distresses of him by whom they have acquired wealth, power, and pride. (*Exit, L.*)

Mor. The nephew and the uncle, poor fools ! have the misfortune to be honest ; Grime, sly villain ! is more cunning, and will not forfeit his hope of cutting evil short at the gallows. The deed must be signed, for the money must be had. Yet these cautionings do but strengthen an aversion which, in spite of necessity, I have always felt against this last act of despair.

Enter ITEM, L.

Item. (*Aside.*) What can detain him ?

Mor. (*Rising.*) Mr. Item, you are right — this mortgage is a bad affair. Delay is dangerous ; thought is vain ; yet I am inclined to think again before I sign.

Item. Think ! — O, by all means, sir ; I like that — I approve that. I am sorry to tell you, here is the upholsterer below, who is very insolent, and declares, if he be not paid immediately, he will have an execution in the house before night.

Mor. Scoundrel ! — Could not you put him off for a week ?

Item. He has been put off too often.

Mor. Are there no means by which you could advance me that sum yourself?

Item. O that I could ! it would make me the happiest man on earth !

Mor. Affectionate soul !

Item. Riches would, indeed, be welcome.

Mor. (*With sensibility.*) Mr. Item, you make me as great a fool as yourself.

Item. As to the deed, I warn you again and again not to sign it.

Mor. Then I will not. Ruin and wretchedness are certain ; but the mode of being wretched is in my own choice, and I will not.

Item. Yet what the devil I shall say to all your tradesmen, I don't know : they are, every one of them, as clamorous as the upholsterer. I don't believe one of them will wait two days.

Mor. Was ever man so pestered ?

Item. Here, too, is a long account that I have just received from your groom at Newmarket, who says he shall soon want even a wisp of hay. For my part, I have not a guinea in hand — I wish I had. Then the impatience of Cheveril ; and what the malignant world will say of the defalcation of a guardian, there is no foreseeing. Sign you must not.

Mor. At least, I will take an hour or two to think of it. Misfortune, disgrace, and approaching infamy, sit mocking at me ; and I shall soon attain the acmé of misery ! (*Exit, L.*)

Item. (*Laughing sneeringly.*) Ha, ha, ha ! You won't sign ! Indeed, moody master of mine ! Ha ! but I will send those about your ears that will presently make you ! Now to see if Joanna is still safe. (*Exit, L.*)

SCENE II. — A Room in the House of GRIME.

Enter CHEVERIL and GRIME, R.

Che. You must let me have the cash directly.

Grime. That is impossible.

Che. I say, you must. Impossible, indeed ! I'm of age, young, rich, gay : I'll have nothing impossible !

Grime. (*Aside.*) What if I were to tell him of Joanna ? 'Twould be a good joke to rob old Item of her ; and he would pay well.

Che. Twelve hours I have been free, and I haven't had a taste of pleasure yet. If I don't make haste, I shall grow old before I begin.

Grime. (*Aside.*) 'Tis a rare thought.

Che. Why do you ruminate ? Do you doubt me ? — doubt a man of eight thousand a year ?

Grime. I say, Mr. Cheveril —

Che. Well, what do you say ?

Grime. Do you love innocence, youth, and beauty ?

Che. Love 'em ! 'Sdeath ! An't I hunting them ? an't I dying for them ?

Grime. (*L.*) I know where they are to be found.

Che. (c.) You!

Grime. The rarest creature!

Che. Where — where, you old fox? where?

Grime. Such pure red and white!

Che. Ay!

Grime. Such moist, ripe, ruddy lips!

Che. 'Sdeath! don't drive me mad! Tell me where! Red and white! ripe and ruddy lips! But, stop; I'll not be unfaithful to my angelic incognita of the Green Park.

Grime. She's a young, untutored thing.

Che. Untutored! Then, depend on it, I'll not be her instructor. She is not for me. I want to be a famous, wicked fellow, but not by insnaring the helpless. No: that isn't the true way.

Grime. Ay, but insnared she will be; and by one old enough to be her grandfather.

Che. No; curse me if she shall!

Grime. Why, what will you do?

Che. Snatch her from such danger, provide for her, cherish her, love her. No, I can't love her: my Green Park beauty has got all my love.

Grime. Ay, now you say something.

Che. Zounds! here have I been an age in the possession of eight thousand a year, and have not done one famous, good, wicked thing yet! It's a damned shame! Isn't it, old Cent per Cent?

Grime. You'll fall in love with her the moment you see her.

Che. To be sure I shall. No, I shan't: I'm in love already; and one can't fall into two pits at the same time.

Grime. (Giving a card.) There — there's her address.

Che. Her address! Mine will do the rest.

Grime. Mention my name, and they'll admit you.

Che. (Reading.) "Mrs. Penfold, No. —" 'Sblood! Why do I stand prating here? Another day will be over, and I shan't get a taste. (Crosses to L. H.)

Grime. 'Tis just by; and I'm telling you of a banquet.

Che. To rescue youth and beauty from age and ugliness is, indeed, a banquet. So good by, old Grime — here goes! (Exit, L. H.)

Grime. (Laughing.) Ha, ha! I hope he'll outrival Item; and if he should chance to marry her, I'll tell him she's legitimate, and shall have to bring the action of recovery for my reward. (Exit, R.)

SCENE III. — Outside of MRS. PENFOLD'S House. Window and door in flat, practical.

Enter CHEVERIL, 1 E. L. H.

Che. This is the street: it must be somewhere hereabouts. What a fatiguing affair pleasure-hunting is! O that I could once more meet my lovely angel — my Green Park deity! But she seems as much lost as Rosamond's Pond. (Examining the card.) This is the number.

Enter ITEM from Mrs. Penefold's door, R. D. F.

Ah, old Item! What, my old boy! you running after the girls too?

Item. Girls! What do you mean by girls, Mr. Cheveril? What brought you here?

Che. The pursuit of pleasure, my old boy — of beauty! Do you know where I can find it?

Item. I! How should I know, Mr. Cheveril? I have nothing to do with beauty. You know business is my pursuit.

Che. O, you sly old poacher! Grime tells me there's a very pretty girl hereabouts.

Item. Grime! — (*Aside*) A prating rascal! — (*To CHEVERIL.*) Did Grime tell you so? (*Alarmed.*) Pooh! pooh! He was only quizzing you.

Che. Quizzing! No, no! (*Reconnoitring the house.*) Door shut — windows fast — all close as a country jail. How shall I get in?

Item. Eh? get into jail? Easy enough. But I say, Mr. Cheveril —

Che. O for a harlequin's wand, that, with a slap, I might turn the house inside out, and see all its contents!

Item. Eh! what? He'll turn the house out of window. O Lord!

Che. Window! Gad, my old boy, a good thought!

(*Buttoning up his coat, and preparing for a leap.*)

Item. Why, what are you going to do?

Che. Do! Why, since the damned inhospitable door won't turn upon its hinges, and admit me, I'll e'en make a morning call, by taking a flying leap through the window. So here goes!

Item. (*Aside.*) What shall I do? — (*Stopping him.*) But I say, Mr. Cheveril, recollect — remember —

Che. Eh? Why, what's the matter? — (*Aside.*) Egad! Item was coming out of the house: he must be the old man! Curse my foolish tongue! It had like to have spoiled all!

Item. (*Anxiously.*) And did Grime say this beauty was to be found here?

Che. Here! no. O, he didn't tell me where! He only mentioned general terms — beauty and so forth; but 'twas only a joke.

Item. A joke! — O, only a joke! (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha! (*Earnestly.*) But you are sure he didn't tell you where?

Che. O, quite sure!

Item. (*Anxiously.*) You're sure it was only a joke? (*Laughing.*) Ha, ha! You're quite sure?

Che. O, only a joke! (*JOANNA throws up the sash, R. F., and appears at the window for a moment.*) What the devil was that?

Item. (*Alarmed, and turning CHEVERIL suddenly round.*) O, nothing!

Che. Nothing! (*Looking towards the window.*) I am sure I saw a petticoat and a sash.

Item. (*Turning him round*) Yes, a sash — a sash window. — (*Aside.*) I wish I could get him away! — (*To CHEVERIL.*) But I forgot: your guardian wants you.

Che. Then he must wait.

Item. But there's some money you must receive. — (*Aside.*) If that doesn't entice him, nothing will.

Che. That must wait too.

Item. But you'd better go to Mr. Mordent's.

Che. (*Aside.*) The old fellow suspects! — (*To ITEM.*) I can't.

Item. Why not?

Che. This is my road, that's yours. I pursue pleasure, you business. You know they always lie different ways; so, fly and prepare the cash. I'll be with you presently; and then hope never to see your face again till the money is spent, and I want more.

(*Exit, D. F. R. H.*)

Item. There he flies, the whirligig! Ah, he's out of sight, and all is safe! That cursed babbling tongue of Grime's had almost ruined me. Now to make Mordent sign the deed, and I'm safe.

(*Exit, L.*)

SCENE IV. — *A Room in the House of Mrs. PENFOLD. Folding doors, D. F. L. H., practical.*

Enter Mrs. PENFOLD, R. 1 E.

Mrs. P. (*Calling.*) Betty!

Betty. (*Without.*) Ma'am.

Mrs. P. Who is it that bounced through the back window in such haste?

Enter BETTY, L.

Betty. I don't know, ma'am. A young — Hem! (*Exit, L.*)

Enter CHEVERIL, L. 1 E.

Che. I am here safe — I have twicked him! Ah! my charmer — Hum! O, your humble servant, madam! Your name is —

Mrs. P. Mrs. Penfold, at your service, sir.

Che. Your acquaintance, honest Mr. Grime, informs me you have a beautiful girl under your care.

Mrs. P. True, sir; but I can permit her to see nobody without Mr. Item's leave.

Che. Item! the cunning rogue! O ma'am, I'm just come from old Item!

Mrs. P. O, if you have his permission —

Che. Permission! — O, yes! — no — that is — (*Aside.*) I won't lie, even to a woman, though I know 'tis the fashion. — (*To Mrs. PENFOLD.*) I haven't got the old boy's permission. I only want

yours; and look here, (*producing a bank note*,) I'll give you this for five minutes' conversation with her.

Mrs. P. Why, bless me! 'tis more than my whole year's annuity! But, observe, sir, it is only a short conversation.

Che. Nothing more.

Mrs. P. No injury to Mr. Item?

Che. Never fear.

Mrs. P. Well, then, only for five minutes. (*Exit, C. D. F.*)

Che. Now, courage, Cheveril, and don't let her imagine I'm one of your sheep-faced fellows. I don't fear any woman except her in the Green Park. Now, if she be worth saving from this old fellow, and I could outwit him, I — O! — I should establish my character for spirit, soul, and intrepidity forever! I'll not be out of countenance. No, damme! I am determined. I'll speak — I'll speak, and to the purpose, too! I'll be a forward, prating, impudent, wicked dog!

Enter JOANNA, C. D. F. CHEVERIL turns his back, and tries to assume courage.

Joa. A gentleman to speak to me! Perhaps he who has written to me, to warn me that I am not safe here, and who has sent me a disguise.

Che. (*Not daring to look at JOANNA.*) Mrs. Penfold! Mrs. Penfold! I wish Mrs. Penfold was here. I should have felt bold enough had she been present.

Joa. It is very strange!

Che. (*Listening.*) What does she say? Ha — hem! Mrs. Penfold! Where the devil now is all my impudence flown?

Joa. I hear from Mrs. Penfold that you wish to speak to me, sir.

Che. Yes — no — yes — that is —. If I could but turn round! — one plunge, and it would be over. (*Turning by degrees.*) Ma — Heavens! (*He stands astonished.*)

Joa. (*Aside.*) Mercy! It is he!

Che. (*Aside.*) The very beauty of the Green Park!

Joa. (*Sighing.*) I had almost hoped never to have seen him more!

Che. (*Aside.*) This is the luckiest — lucky! To find her here, exposed to I know not what danger!

Joa. (*Aside.*) I have thought of him too much.

Che. Madam, I am sorry to find you —

Joa. Sorry to find me?

Che. No, no, no, madam: glad to find you — infinitely glad; but not exposed as you are in this house.

Joa. Exposed to what, sir? Then was it you who wrote to me under the name of Lennox, this morning, and sent me a disguise?

Che. (*Aside.*) Lennox! disguise! Is this his charmer, then? — (*To JOANNA.*) Zounds! my sweet — I beg your pardon; but don't put it on: 'tis another plot. I never speak ill of any body; but Lennox is a great villain: that is, where women are concerned. O, I am so glad to see you! Why the devil didn't you come into the Green Park again? I got the rheumatism watching for you. I was frantic to think I had lost you.

Joa. How so, sir? We are not acquainted.

Che. I am sorry for it, madam; b— b— but I hope we shall be. I have been a very Bedlamite; I could neither eat, drink, nor sleep; I have dreamed of you every night; you have been in my head, in my heart, in my arms.

Joa. Your arms, sir?

Che. O, lord! no, madam, no, no! I—I— am talking in my sleep now. Forgive me if I appear intruding; indeed, my intention is good.

Mor. (*Without, L.*) I tell you, I will see her!

Che. (*Alarm'd.*) 'Sdeath! I hear my guardian! (*Looking about.*) I must not be seen; but, for Heaven's sake, let me speak to you once more! I'll hide here. Get rid of guardy, and I'll pop out, and finish the conversation. (*Retires into a closet, L. D. F., from which he occasionally looks.*)

Joa. But, sir, what will Mrs. Penfold say? what will she think?

Enter MORDENT, L. 1 E.

Mor. (*Surveying JOANNA.*) Your humble servant, madam. — (*Aside.*) She is, indeed, beautiful!

Joa. Sir, is it Mrs. Penfold that you want?

Mor. No, madam; it is yourself.

Che. (*Aside, from the closet.*) Curse me, if I don't think old Item has placed her here for him!

Joa. I have not the pleasure of knowing you, sir.

Mor. That, madam, is true; but you know a gentleman of the name of Lennox, madam, do you not?

Joa. Not personally, sir; but I have received a letter signed by that name.

Mor. He has made proposals to you, has he not?

Joa. Proposals! I do not understand you, sir. He warned me of some threatened danger, but, I confess, his letter was a riddle to me.

Mor. (*Aside.*) By Heavens, she is an innocent! Nay, her countenance would half persuade me there are beings capable of happiness.

Che. (*Aside, from the closet.*) Zounds! he looks as if he, too, would fall in love with her!

Mor. Pardon my intrusion, madam. I am a stranger to you, but I am interested most warmly in your welfare; and since I have seen you, that interest has increased. Madam, you are in danger.

Joa. You, too, warn me of danger! What is it, and who is it, I am to fear?

Mor. Young, beautiful, innocent, and unprotected, you should ask, who is it you are not to fear? Are you yet to learn that youth, innocence, and beauty, are but so many incentives to the lawless libertine, and that there are thousands ready to plot their destruction?

Che. (*Aside.*) What the devil are they about?

Joa. There is a tone, sir, in your voice, that—I know not why—strikes directly to my heart.

Che. (*Aside.*) The devil there is! She didn't say that of my voice.

Joa. Point out to me my danger — teach me to avoid it. I will confide in you.

Mor. Confide in none but yourself. I have been almost lured into a plot for the destruction of your innocence, because I was led to believe that innocence did not exist; but I have seen you, am convinced, and will atone my error. Who and what are you?

Joa. I am nobody — the child of nobody — a branch lopped off, and east away, that might have grown, but that could find no root. Misfortune and an active spirit, struggling to shake off oppression, have quickened me a little. Other than this, I am but a simple girl; and my whole art is to note what I see, and to speak what I think.

Mor. Whoever you are, come but with me; and, while I have a morsel, a home, or a heart, you shall share them.

Che. (*Running forward from the closet.*) Damme, if she shall.

Mor. Why, Mr. —

Che. She shall have my morsel, my home, and my heart!

Mor. You in this house, sir — with this lady, sir!

Che. Nay, sir — you in this house, sir — with this lady, sir! Madam, put no faith in him; he does not care a farthing for you. I love you, heart, body, and soul! I'll offer you no wrong. Every proof that the most ardent, purest passion can give, feel, or imagine, shall be yours.

Joa. For Heaven's sake, gentlemen! O, where is Mrs. Penfold? I must seek her, to prevent mischief. (*Exit, precipitately, c. d. f., calling "Mrs. Penfold!"*)

Mor. (*Preventing CHEVERIL from passing.*) How came I, sir, to find you here?

Che. Zounds! sir, how came I to find you here?

Enter MRS. PENFOLD, c. d. f.

Mrs. P. What have you done, sir? Ah, another gentleman! A little more, and you had frightened her into a fit.

Mor. Hark you, Mrs. Penfold; at your peril, keep her safe and free from insult till my return. (*Exit, L.*)

Che. Insult! If I hear that old Item, or any body else, insults her, I'll make a general massacre! Let any one take her away, speak to her, or even look at her, while I am gone, and I'll grind you all to powder! (*Going, but returning hastily.*) Here — here's another bank bill. I'll be back in five minutes. Keep her safe, and I'll give you a thousand pounds. My name is Cheveril — ten thousand! (*Going again, but returning.*) Cheveril, I say! My whole estate, my old girl! (*Exit, L.*)

Mrs. P. But, sir — sir! Mr. Item will never forgive me.

(*Exit, L.*)

ReEnter JOANNA, hastily, c. d. f.

Joa. Did I hear right? Am I, then, in the power of the man against whom Winter has so often warned me? Every thing confirms it. I must escape; but how? Ah! the disguise sent me for a vile purpose shall effect a good one. I will use it; return to the spot where

Jonathan used to meet me in the Green Park ; under his protection seek some humble retirement ; and, while an honest though poor independence becomes the fruit of virtuous industry, I will pray for that father who exposed me, unprotected and helpless, to the vicissitudes of the world !

(*Exit, R.*)

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — *The Steward's Room. A table and two chairs.*

Enter ITEM, enraged, and GRIME, determined, with a bag, R.

Grime. Once for all, Mr. Item, it will not do ; so be of a sweet temper.

Item. Why, you grumbling old blockhead ! what would you have ? May you not thank me for every shilling you are worth in the world ?

Grime. Don't tell me, Mr. Item ; I am but your scavenger, and you put me to a deal of dirty work.

Item. Here's ingratitude ! Why, Mr. Grime —

Grime. Well, Mr. Item.

Item. Did I not first find you in Fullwood's Rents, where you were starving in rags and wretchedness ? Answer that.

Grime. Well !

Item. Did I not take you to Monmouth Street ; make you cast your beggar's skin ; transform you into something almost human ; hire you apartments in the Temple ; and pass you on my master for a rich usurer — a damned rogue ?

Grime. Very true ; but you would not let me act my part. You took care to be the damned rogue yourself.

Item. Have I not trusted you, tutored you, taught you your trade, and furnished the tools ?

Grime. What then ?

Item. And do you pretend to bargain, wrangle, and prescribe terms to me ?

Grime. Yes, I do.

Item. You do ?

Grime. I do. Help yourself how you can.

Item. Here's a villain !

Grime. You trusted me, you know ; you taught me my trade, and furnished the tools.

Item. You viper ! Sting the besom that fostered you ?

Grime. I follow your own example. Mr. Mordent fostered you. There's morality in it.

Item. O, damn your morality !

Grime. Be of a sweet temper. Time was I was your slave ; you are now mine.

Item. O, the rascal — the infernal rascal!

Grime. I'm too deep in your secrets for you to dare discard me; so I'll have my share.

Item. Your —

Grime. Ay, my — my full share; so, be sweet tempered.

Item. And who is to find the money?

Grime. You!

Item. And who is to run the risk?

Grime. You!

Item. And who is to be prosecuted for usury and collusion?

Grime. Cast, perhaps, for perjury — whipped, imprisoned, and put in the pillory. You!

Item. And you to run away with half the profits?

Grime. Yes.

Item. Here's justice! O, what a damned world do we live in!

Grime. Your fortune is made; you must now help to make mine.

Enter JONATHAN WINTER, unperceived, L. H. D. F.

Item. Here's a villain!

Grime. You must, or I tell.

Item. What will you tell?

Grime. All — all the usurious tricks you have practised on Mordent; the arts by which you have cheated him of his estates, pretending that I am the man; your intention to foreclose; your neglect in not paying yourself interest, purposely to rob according to law; your plots to ruin Cheveril; all — all!

Item. You will tell all this?

Grime. I will.

Item. (Seizing GRIME, L.) Why, you fiend! you superlative villain! you cutthroat!

Grime. (Seeing WINTER.) Hem! (A pause.)

Item. (Aside.) Ah, the cursed spy! — (To WINTER.) Ah, good Mr. Winter! here is my old friend, Mr. Grime, has — has — (Aside to GRIME.) You see what your villany has done — (To WINTER.) He is a good-natured soul, as you know. (Aside to GRIME.) Scoundrel! — (To WINTER.) And he — I — I —

Win. O, yes, yes — I understand; ye needn't trouble yoursen to explain. Ye'er a sweet nut, if ye war well crackt, I warrant ye.

Item. I — I — I was bantering him — trying to — (Aside to GRIME.) Villain! — (To WINTER.) But nothing can put him in a passion. — (Aside to GRIME.) O, curse you! — (To WINTER.) Nothing! Perhaps you want our good master, Mr. Winter?

Win. Ecod! for once in your life ye'er right, Mr. Item. I do want him, and quickly, too.

Item. He is gone out. Nothing but a joke, Mr. Winter — nothing else.

Win. (Aside, clinching his fist.) Damme! how I should like to have one thump at 'em!

Item. Can I — can my dear friend, Mr. Grime, — (aside to him,) O, you thief! — (to WINTER,) — do you any service?

Win. Come, come; none o' your hypocrisy wi' me; 'twon't do, I tell ye.

Item. Can we oblige you any way in the world?

Win. Yes.

Item. (*Fawningly.*) How? how?

Win. Why, by taking compassion o' the bowels o' ye'er brother, Jack Ketch, and be ye'er own hangman! (*Exit, L.*)

Item. There, villain! you see what you have done?

Grime. Is it my fault? I tell you again, you had better be sweet tempered. I shall say no more. You know my mind. (*Going.*)

Item. (*Aside.*) O, that I could poison him! — (*Aloud.*) Mr. Grime! Mr. Grime! my dear Mr. Grime!

Grime. Well, Mr. Item.

Item. This quarrelling is very foolish.

Grime. O!

Item. We are necessary to each other.

Grime. I know it.

Item. Your hand, my dear Grime.

Grime. There.

Item. We are friends?

Grime. If you please.

Item. Well, well! — (*Aside.*) Damn him! how I hate the dog!
— (*To GRIME.*) Concerning this Berkshire mortgage?

Grime. Ay.

Item. You shall have twenty per cent. on the premium. — (*Aside.*) I must quiet him.

Grime. That won't do.

Item. (*Aside.*) Unconscionable rascal! — (*To GRIME.*) Thirty!

Grime. It won't do. Half — the full half.

Item. (*Aside.*) Hell take him! — (*To GRIME.*) Well, well, my dear Grime, the half be it.

Grime. Together with my moiety of the thousand given with Joanna, and the half of her fortune — if you know what.

Item. Your — hem! (*Sighing.*) You shall — you shall. Are you satisfied?

Grime. On these conditions.

Item. Where is the deed?

Grime. In that bag.

Item. Mordent is coming; I know he will, for I know he shall, sign. But that is not all.

Grime. What more?

Item. This damned Yorkshireman will assuredly betray us to him; and Lady Anne's jointure prevents his being so entirely destitute and powerless as is necessary.

Grime. But how is that to be helped?

Item. O, we must let her relations know his conduct; they will make her quit him. (*Looking off, L.*) Hush! here he comes! I will give you my reasons and instructions when we are alone. Where is the deed?

Grime. Here, ready. (*Laying it on the table.*) Hem!

Enter MORDENT, L.

Mor. (Angrily.) What is the meaning, Mr. Item, that I see the upholsterer, and two other ill-looking followers with him, below?

Item. Nay, why ask me? why knit your brows at me? Can I coin?

Mor. Excuse me. I am a hunted bull, and butt at friends and foes.

Item. The insolent fellow insisted on taking possession; so, thinking you would not wish Lady Anne to know, I prevailed on him and the officers to remain in the hall till I could speak to you. If I have done amiss, show me in what.

Mor. No, no; I know your zeal. — (*To GRIME.*) Why will you not advance two thousand pounds for that and other immediate purposes, and delay signing, Mr. Grime? I ask only a day.

Item. Ay, Mr. Grime, why will you not? Pray do, Mr. Grime!

Grime. (With gravity.) Impossible!

Item. Don't tell me — impossible, indeed! You ought to consent — it is your duty; nay, you shall consent! Now do consent; recollect how much —

Grime. I cannot — must have security.

Mor. (Laughing convulsively.) Ha, ha, ha! — (*To GRIME.*) Villain! where is the deed?

Item. So you will not, Mr. Grime? you will not?

Grime. I wish I could, but I am myself a borrower; the money is not my own.

Item. Hem!

Mor. (Involuntarily.) Ha, ha, ha! Damn your rascally hypocrisy! Give me the pen.

Item. (Holding his arm.) Why, you will not sign, sir, will you?

Mor. Peace, fool! Cannot you see a wretch on the wheel but that your bones, too, must ache? (*ITEM quitting him, he signs.*)

Item. Ah! it is always thus! I may advise, but my advice is never followed.

Mor. (Sealing.) “*I deliver this as my act and deed.*” Here, implement of hell! I know your thirst, bloodhound! 'Tis ready-mixed destruction; take, quaff, and burst! Begone!

Item. (Seizing the deed.) Come, sir; my good master has sufficient reason to be angry with you; it was very unfriendly, sir, to refuse. You teach Mr. Mordent what he has to expect. — (*Aside.*) All is now secure!
(*Exeunt ITEM and GRIME, L.*)

Reënter JONATHAN WINTER, L. H., looking earnestly after them.

Win. Ha' ye signed? ha' ye signed?

Mor. Ask no questions. Yes!

Win. Then it's all over. Well, well. Stark deed has no remeed, as the proverb says. Two wolves may well worry one sheep. I cam to tell ye, that ye'er smooth tongued steward and his companion, Grime, are about two of the greatest scoundrels as ever walked on two legs. But 'tis no matter.

Mor. Pshaw ! fool !

Win. I tall ye, they are two damned villains ! 'Tis nae six minutes agone sin' I heard all their terrifying gab.

Mor. Hear !

Win. Yas, hear !

Mor. What did you hear ?

Win. Item himself confess that he had fleeced ye of ye'er estates ; that Grime be nae mair but his jackal ; that it is his intention to fore-close ; that he has wilfully neglected to pay himsel interest, for that he may claw ye agreeably to law ; that there ha' been sham deeds and shameful doings ; and that a plot is laid to filch Maister Cheveril of aw' his wealth.

Mor. (*Laughing convulsively.*) Ha, ha, ha ! You heard all this ?

Win. Ay, I did, wi' my own ears.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha ! Item ? Are you sure you heard this precious mischief ?

Win. When did Jonathan Winter tell you a lie ?

Mor. Ha, ha, ha ! Item ? I am glad on't ! 'Tis right — 'tis consistent — 'tis delightful ! (*Frantically.*) Ha, ha, ha ! Abraham's rejected prayer — not one honest man ! Ha, ha, ha !

Win. Come, come — fair and softly : not you, nor the black clawed Lucifer himsen, can deny but that old Jonathan Winter is honest.

Mor. Item ? Ha, ha, ha ! And I, too — I thought him just and good. O, gull, gull, gull ! Ha, ha, ha ! (*Recollecting himself.*) Tell Mr. Clement I wish to speak with him.

Win. But your child — ha' ye heard nothing o' her ?

Mor. My child ! — True : you recall another agonizing reflection : 'twas to this villain I trusted her.

Win. To Item ? to old Item ? Then Heaven have mercy on her, that's all !

Mor. Ah ! I see at once — his horrid plan bursts upon me ! He knew of her legitimacy : his gains were not secure while she lived. Away ! send Clement to me.

Win. Ay, noo the steed is stolen, ye wad lock the door.

(*Exit, R.*)

Mor. (*Convulsively.*) O, the sharp-fanged wolf ! — Ha, ha, ha !

Enter LENNOX, L.

Len. Mordent, how now ? — How you look !

Mor. I am an ass — a most ineffable ass !

Len. What is the matter ?

Mor. Ha, ha, ha ! 'Tis proved upon me.

Len. Your mirth is of a strange kind.

Mor. The man whom I have trusted through life — ha, ha, ha ! — he whose rigid honesty — do you mark me ? — ha, ha, ha ! — Honesty !

Len. Well !

Mor. Ha, ha, ha ! — Whose honesty made me sometimes doubt the truth of the self-evident system of evil — ha, ha, ha ! — he's a rascal ! a double-leagued hell-dog !

Len. Your steward ?

Mor. Item — a deep, damnable, thorough-paced villain ! that can bully, cajole, and curse — fawn, flatter, and filch ! Ha, ha, ha !

Len. Be patient.

Mor. O, I am delighted — ha, ha, ha !

Len. Be calm : you knew yourself to be in the power of a villain, and 'tis little matter whether his name be Grime or Item.

Mor. How ? Ha, ha, ha ! In a world of rascality, are not two rascals better than one ?

Len. Nay, but attend to me : I want your help instantly at Mrs. Penfold's.

Mor. (*After a pause.*) Mrs. Penfold ?

Len. Yes.

Mor. (*Recollecting.*) It must not be.

Len. Ahoy ! what's the freak now ?

Mor. (*Wildly.*) You can have no help of mine !

Len. (*Angrily.*) Indeed, but I must.

Mor. (*With earnest rapidity.*) I would not commit an injury on that girl for worlds !

Len. (*With increased anger.*) Why, what conscientious mummery is this ? You neglect your own child, and pretend to interest yourself for a stranger !

Mor. If the stranger be an angel of light — a beneficent being, why not ?

Len. Beneficent ! — What, in this system of evil ?

Mor. An exception to the rule — a rare exception.

Len. Like Item ?

Mor. Pshaw ! — Hell !

Len. And may not your deserted daughter be equally an angel ?

Mor. (*Wildly.*) May she ? If she should, I'll have no concern in the ruin of that girl.

Len. (*With suspicion and anger.*) Hark ye, Mordent : I suspect you are plotting.

Mor. I ! — 'Tis likely, indeed, at the moment that I have plunged into such a gulf as that which now surrounds me, that I should be plotting about a girl.

Len. Well, well, it may be so. The maid of the house, who is in my interest, tells me she has adopted the disguise I sent her. As to you, Mordent, if you refuse me the aid I have a right to expect at your hands, you must no longer expect my forbearance. Ponder on it well, and meet me instantly where your presence may be serviceable to me. My heart is in the affair ; and woe be to him who stands an obstacle in my path to her possession !

— (*Exit, L.*)

Mor. (*Laughing despondingly.*) Ha, ha, ha ! — His forbearance ! — Forbearance ? — Well, well, no matter : friends and foes, assist him ! Debt has made me his slave, and why should I stand a bulwark in the way of destruction ? why stretch forth my hand ? Is there one for me to grasp at ? None ! I will assist him, and help to pull down the virtue that puts my own vice out of countenance. (*Exit, R. H.*)

Reënter JONATHAN WINTER, R. 3 E. II.

Win. Ecod! this poor lass runs in my head strangely; and my heart goes thump, thump, whenever I think on her, so that I can't rest ony where. 'Tis no use my asking old Item fairly and openly where he ha' put her, because he wouldn't tell; and it wouldn't be much more use my throttling him to get it out on him, because then he couldn't tell. But I'll watch him.

Enter CHEVERIL, 1 E. L. II., in great haste, searching.

Well, mon, what are ye looking a'ter?

Che. My dear Winter, can you direct me where Mr. Item or Mr. Grime may be found?

Win. I direct ye to see such a pair o' scoondrels? I may as well tell ye how to catch plague, pestilence, and famine, at once. I'm a hunting one on 'em mysel.

Che. 'Sdeath! they are both dead and buried, I believe; for they are neither here nor there, nor any where else. — Can you tell me where I can borrow a few thousands?

Win. Pray, may I be so bold as to ask whether ye tak me for a thief or a steward?

Che. I shall go mad! O Winter! I left the most angelic girl your eyes ever beheld, at a house hard by. She must be friendless and fatherless, exposed to the arts of villains.

Win. (*Eagerly.*) What's that ye say of faitherless angel?

Che. I saw her first in the Green Park.

Win. Green Park!

Che. She is now at Mrs. Penfold's. A divine girl! a miracle!

Win. What? how? a lass in the bloom of youth — a young creature?

Che. Not twenty; yet with the penetration, wit, and understanding of the seven sages.

Win. (*Agitated.*) The Green Park! Penfold's!

Che. Hard by.

Win. I know the place — I'll be a'ter her! If it should be — Quickly, old Jonathan, quickly! (*Exit, hastily, L. 1 E.*)

Che. What is the matter with the honest soul? I don't know what sum may be necessary, but I find I can do nothing without money. I must have enongh, too, for I must make sure. I'll place her in safety and splendor; she shall be my queen.

Enter ITEM, L.

Ah, my dear, dear Item! I am the luckiest fellow on earth — am in instant want of money!

Item. So am I — I have been in want of it all my life.

Che. You must furnish me with ten thousand pounds.

Item. Ten thousand! Ah! I wish I could!

Che. 'Sblood! don't stand wishing, but give me the money.

Item. If my friend Grime was but here —

Che. 'Sdeath and the devil ! give me the money ! I shall lose her — she'll be gone ! I'll make over the seventeen thousand that is in Mordent's hands — I will, by Heaven ! — on the word and honor of a gentleman !

Item. The seventeen thousand !

Che. I will.

Item. It is true, I have cash in hand, but not my own.

Che. Zounds ! never mind whose it is — let me have it !

Item. Why, if I could but manage the matter — I am a poor old man, and it would be a little lift.

Che. O, damn your little lift !

Item. You are sure you understand ? The seventeen thousand — the whole seventeen.

Che. I tell you, yes.

Item. The risk will be very great.

Che. Do you doubt my word ?

Item. No, no ; but —

Che. But what ?

Item. Your hand writing, on a stamp, would be a memorandum.

Che. You shall have it. Write a receipt for seventeen thousand : I'll sign it.

(Item searches out an account book, and lays it on the table, then takes out another book, finds a stamp, and writes.)

Item. Ay, this is the thing. You remember the risk ? otherwise it might be thought —

Che. Give it me ; I have no time for thinking.

Item. I must borrow to replace it.

Che. Will you come away, and let me have the money ? Come, come, man ! 'Sdeath ! will you despatch ? *(Going, R.)*

Enter CLEMENT, L. 1 E.

Cle. *(To ITEM.)* Do you know where Mr. Mordent is, sir ?

Item. No, sir.

(Exit CHEVERIL, hurrying ITEM off, R., who puts up his receipt in one book, and forgets the other that he laid upon the table.)

Cle. Mr. Mordent has asked for me, and, unfortunately, I cannot find him ; I fear he has signed the mortgage. O, this uncle ! Never was situation so excruciating as mine ! Must I cast off all ties of blood, become his accuser, and, as the world would call it, betray my benefactor ? Besides, what have I to reveal ? My fears and my suspicions, unconnected facts, that can alarm but not relieve : and who is it that I should thus impotently accuse ? My own uncle ! *(Seeing the book on the table.)* Ha ! what have we here ? As I live, his private account book ! The very thing he has so carefully concealed from all inspection ! — What shall I do ? Deliver it to Mordent ? What may be the consequences ? Disgrace, infamy, and — Dreadful thought ! I must not be rash. *(Looking off, R.)* Hark ! he's here ! I must consider well. *(Exit with the book, L. 1 E.)*

Reënter ITEM and CHEVERIL, hastily, R. 1 E. — ITEM, with his hair on end, runs up to the table, frightened, looks over it, under it, and every where.

Che. (*Anxious to get him away.*) You see there is no book there.

Item. (*With terror.*) I am certain I had it in my hand.

Che. We have not quitted the room a minute; nobody can have been here since.

Item. We left my nephew here.

Che. Well, if he have it, 'tis safe enough.

Item. I don't know that — I don't know that! If I have lost it, I shall never sleep again!

Che. Come away! — you have it somewhere, locked up safe.

Item. No: I laid it down here — I am positive of it!

Che. Nay, but you see that it is impossible. (*Taking his arm.*) Come — come!

Item. If it be gone, I shall go mad!

Che. Is it so valuable?

Item. (*Still searching his pockets, the table, and the chamber.*) I would not lose it for all I am worth in the world!

Che. (*Elbowing him, but not rudely at first, to the door.*) Come, come! What did it contain?

Item. My soul! my secrets!

Che. Well, it certainly is not here. You must go — you shall go! I'll indemnify you.

Item. You can't.

Che. I tell you, I will. (*Pushing him off.*) It is in your own room.

Item. I hope so — I hope so! (*Turning back.*) But my heart misgives me. O Lord! I am undone!

Che. (*Pushing him again.*) Will you go?

Item. (*Turning.*) I am wretched!

Che. (*Pushing him.*) You won't?

Item. (*Turning again.*) I am ruined!

Che. (*Pushing him.*) Will you, or —

Item. (*Turning.*) I'm lost! I'm dead! I'm —

Che. (*Violently forcing him off.*) Furies and fire! begone!

(*Exeunt, L.*)

Reënter MORDENT, R. 1 E.

Mor. (*Calling.*) Mr. Cheveril! (*Running over to the door.*) Mr. Cheveril! 'Tis impossible to stop him. But no matter; he can be no further interruption to Lennox, who says he is certain his schemes will succeed. O fortune! fortune! how dost thou aid the plots of man, when destruction is his object! And I, too, have calmly permitted the ruin of an innocent, who, while I looked and listened to her, I would have lost my life to defend!

Enter LADY ANNE, R. 1 E.

Lady A. I am driven upon an agonizing task, which a too painful

sense of duty, and your want of confidence, only could oblige me to execute.

Mor. Proceed, madam ; apologies for feeling or for inflicting pain are quite unnecessary.

Lady A. Would it were to be avoided ! — But you have left me no alternative. You have a daughter : I, it seems, have innocently been the cause that she is disowned and abandoned. Of this I cannot knowingly consent to be a moment guilty. Our separation is decided to be inevitable.

Mor. And you support your fate with patience ?

Lady A. Patience ! — Nay, nay ; I do not deserve this reproach.

Mor. You deserve ! — Who shall dare insinuate it ?

Lady A. At this moment, when my heart again bursts from the bondage in which it has been intralld, and plays the part it was wont to do with my affections, happy days and past endearments rush upon my mind with sensations unutterable. As I was, I first won your heart ; had I remained what I was, time might have recalled it to my power. But I find too late that I have wrecked my own peace, at the moment that I might have restored yours.

Mor. (*Much moved.*) Madam, I — I — I request I may be tortured by any thing but your candor.

Lady A. The total absence of affection on your part was sufficient to torture me, and to drive me to every method to seek relief ; but to be the cause of banishing a child from a father's arms and heart — to cast her an orphan on a tempestuous world, — no ! Whatever my other mistakes may have been, of that no tongue shall accuse me.

Mor. Right : let the guilt be all my own.

Lady A. And now I have one last request to make, which I conjure you, by all our former affection, not to deny. The settlements which you made on me in our early days of love were ample : in the sincerity of affection I vowed, if ever they should be necessary to your happiness, that moment they should again be yours.

Mor. (*Greatly agitated.*) Madam —

Lady A. Nay, nay, I will not be refused. All the first years of our union my commands were obeyed ; once more, and once only, I exert the prerogative your affection then gave me. The deeds are now in Mr. Clement's possession ; he will restore them to you.

Mor. (*Indignantly.*) Never !

Lady A. Stop ! beware of rashness ! You are a father, and have a father's sacred duties to fulfil. Take home your daughter ; make her what amends you can for the desertion of a parent's love ; derive delight from her innocent lips ; let it sometimes remind you of those which once smiled upon you with such fervent affection.

Mor. (*Aside.*) 'Tis too much ! Scorpions could not sting like this !

Lady A. Money is a poor vehicle for the affections of the soul — a contemptible token of the love I have borne you ; but, such as it is, for that love's sake, give it welcome. A cold adieu I cannot take — it freezes my very heart. From my soul I ever loved, and ever shall love ! Had I a heaven of happiness to bestow, would you but deign to accept it from me, it should be yours !

(*Exit, R.*)

Mor. Why, so, so, so ! It rages — it bursts — it is complete ! Let fate or fiends increase the misery if they can !

Reënter JONATHAN WINTER, 1 E. L. H.

Win. It's past — it's all over ! My fears and forebodings are fulfilled ! I hae foond her — I hae foond her, I tell ye.

Mor. Have you ? where ?

Win. Now, indeed, Jonathan Winter is a rascally go-between !
(*With horror.*) But what are you ?

Mor. You say you have found her ?

Win. She is gone — she is ruined ! Ye're a wratch ! the most miserable o' wratches !

Mor. Tormenting demon ! What — who — Where have you been ?

Win. To Mrs. Penfold's.

Mor. (*Seized with terror.*) Penfold's ! — What do you say ?

Win. I was too late. A maister scoondrel, e'en as wicked as her own feyther, had decoyed her into his domned net !

Mor. (*Distractedly.*) Decoyed !

Win. Lennox — ye'er friend, ye'er crony !

Mor. (*With horror.*) From Mrs. Penfold's ?

Win. Haven't I toud ye ?

Mor. Lennox ! Joanna !

Win. Yes ; Lennox — Joanna ! Let it ring in your ears : — Joanna, ye'er child — ye'er guileless Joanna ! He sent her a disguise ; she ha' put it on ; and the maid do say ha' gon' off with Lennox.

Mor. (*Frantiely.*) Misery of hell ! And was that Joanna ? that my child ? Celestial creature ! And I — (*A pause of despair.*)

Win. (*Alarmed at the agony of MORDENT.*) Sir — sir ! Maister !

Mor. (*Starting.*) I almost the pander ! Imagination paints her shrieking on the bed of infamy, and chains her in the arms of lust ; and I, her father, knew it, stood calmly by, and did not prevent it !
(*A pause of fixed horror.*)

Win. (*With great feeling.*) Maister — dear maister ! — Maister Mordent ! dear Maister Mordent ! — Speak ! — Ize forgi' ye. Why, maister ! Ize pray for ye — Ize die for ye — Ize forgi' ye !

Mor. (*Starting from a profound trance of despondency.*) Fly ! summon the servants ! arm yourselves ! — Follow me !

(*Exit, hastily, L.*)

Win. (*Confusedly.*) William ! Sandy ! Jock ! (*Exit, calling, L.*)

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *The Green Park. Twilight.**Enter MORDENT and LENNOX, L.*

Mor. Tell me, and tell me instantly, where you have lodged Joanna?

Len. Nay, sir, where have you lodged Joanna?

Mor. Mr. Lennox, I will not be trifled with: where is she?

Len. Nor will I be trifled with. I have discovered you, Mr Mordent; I have heard of your visit to Mrs. Penfold; of that old villain Item's part in the affair; in short, of your whole contrivance.

Mor. This will not serve, sir; it is all evasion.

Len. Ay, sir, it is evasion — cunning, base, damned evasion; and I affirm she is in your possession.

Mor. Mr. Lennox, I am at this moment a determined and desperate man, and must be answered. Where is she?

Len. Sir, I am as determined and desperate as yourself; and I say, Where is she? for you alone can tell.

Mor. 'Tis false!

Len. False?

Mor. Ay, false!

Len. (*Going up to him.*) He is the falsest of the false that dares whisper such a word!

Mor. Hark you, sir: I understand your meaning, and came purposely provided. (*Producing a pair of pistols.*) Take your choice; they are loaded.

Len. O, with all my heart. (*Presenting at some distance.*) Come, sir!

Mor. (*Approaching sternly.*) Nigher!

Len. (*Going towards him desperately.*) As nigh as you please.

Mor. (*After a short pause.*) Why don't you fire?

Len. Why do you turn your weapon out of the line? (*Dropping his arm — a pause.*) I see your intention, Mr. Mordent: you are tired of life, and want me to murder you. Damn it, man! that is not treating your friend like a friend. Kill me, if you will, but don't make me your assassin! (*Another pause — both greatly affected.*)

Mor. (*Tenderly.*) Nay, kill me, or tell me where you have lodged the wretched girl!

Len. (*With great energy.*) Fiends seize me, if I have lodged her any where, or know what is become of her!

Mor. Your behavior tells me you are sincere; and to convince you at once that I am no less so, know she is my daughter.

Len. (*With astonishment.*) Your daughter! Murder my friend, and seduce his daughter!

Mor. (*Deeply affected.*) We are sad fellows. (*They pause, and gradually recover from the deep passion with which they were mutually seized.*) Again and again, 'tis a vile world!

Len. (*Eagerly.*) I'll seek it through with you to find her. Forgive me!

Mor. (*Taking his hand.*) Would I could forgive myself!

Len. (*With animation.*) But it seems, then, she has escaped, and is perhaps in safety.

Mor. O that she were! Winter used to meet her here, in the Green Park, about this time of the evening. (*Listening.*) I hear the sound of feet. (*Looking off, L. S. E.*) 'Tis not a woman. Let us retire among the trees, and keep on the watch.

(*Retiring, 3 E. R.*)

Enter CHEVERIL, L. S. E.

Che. (*Looking round with great anxiety.*) She is not here! She is gone — forever gone! I shall never more set eyes on her! I'll fire that infernal house — I'll fire London — I'll pistol Lennox! I may perambulate here till doomsday, and to no purpose. She would have been here, had she been free. Ay, ay, she is in thralldom — perhaps in the very gripe of vice. Furies! — Lennox is a liar! I'll cut his throat — I'll hack him piecemeal! I'll have her, or I'll have his heart! (*Retires among the trees, L. C., searching.*)

Enter JOANNA, in men's clothes, R. 2 E.

Joa. Whither shall I fly? where shall I hide? how fly the pursuits of wicked men? I have neither house, home, nor friend on earth; and the fortitude that can patiently endure is my only resource. What then? Have I not escaped from those snares which vice had spread for me! O, happiness! I have — I have! and rather than venture in them again, welcome, hunger! welcome, cold! welcome, the bare ground, the biting air, and the society of brute beasts!

Che. (*Coming forward.*) What can that youth want? Whom is he watching here? (*Walking round JOANNA.*)

Joa. As I live, the young gentleman I saw this morning! What reason can he have for being in this place?

Che. (*Aside.*) He eyes me with curiosity.

Joa. His intentions seemed good.

Che. (*Aside.*) Who can say — he may know her. He is a smart, handsome, dapper fellow. I don't like him.

Joa. I am not now confined by walls and bolts; there can be no danger; I'll speak. Pray, sir —

Che. (*Abruptly.*) Well, sir?

Joa. Have you seen a young person?

Che. (*Eagerly.*) A lady?

Joa. Yes.

Che. (*Rapidly.*) With blue eyes, auburn hair, aquiline nose, ivory teeth, carnation lips, ravishing mouth, enchanting neck, a form divine, and an angel face?

Joa. Have you seen her?

Che. Are you acquainted with that lady?

Joa. I am acquainted with a lady, but not an angel.

Che. Ah, then, 'tis not she! (*Jealously.*) Perhaps you are her — her lover?

Joa. Humph! I — I love her.

Che. You do? — (*Aside.*) I'll be the death of him! — (*To JOANNA.*) And she loves you?

Joa. Why, yes.

Che. (*Aside.*) I'll put an end to him! — (*To JOANNA.*) Are you married?

Joa. No.

Che. You — you mean to marry her?

Joa. No.

Che. Is she, then, lost to virtue?

Joa. Who dare suppose it?

Che. Ay — who dare? I'll cut the villain's throat that dares!

Joa. She has endured insult, constraint, and violence, but not guilt.

Che. Guilt! — No, not wilful guilt: impossible! But, then, is she safe? is she safe?

Joa. Disowned by her family, exposed to the snares of vice, houseless, hopeless, friendless, not daring to approach the wicked haunts of men, she wanders forlorn and desolate, willing to suffer, disdaining to complain.

Che. Tell me where: I will rescue, defend, protect, cherish, love, adore, and die for her!

Joa. Is your heart pure? — Have you no selfish, dishonest purposes?

Che. How came you to imagine, sir, that I, or any other man, durst couple her and dishonesty, even in a thought?

Joa. Meet me here to-morrow, at ten.

Che. You?

Joa. You shall see her.

Che. See her! — Shall I?

Joa. You shall.

Che. My dear friend! (*Catching her in his arms.*) I'll make your fortune! At nine?

Joa. Ten.

Che. Could I not see her to-night?

Joa. To-morrow Joanna will meet you.

Che. Joanna! — Is that her dear name?

Joa. It is.

Che. Delightful sound! the sweet Joanna! the divine Joanna! My heart's best blood is not so precious as Joanna!

Joa. But pray, where do you live?

Che. Joanna! — In Portland Place.

Joa. Your name?

Che. Joanna! — Cheveril, Hans Cheveril. Joanna! — Be sure you don't forget.

Joa. I'll be punctual. (*MORDENT, 3 E. R. H., appears among the trees.*) Who's here? (*Glides off, L. 2 E.*)

Che. Joanna! — At eight, did you say? Where is he gone? Sir, sir! (*Exit, hastily, R. S. E.*)

Mor. (*Coming forward.*) I heard the name repeated! — (*Aloud.*) Who is it here that knows Joanna?

Joa. (*Appearing, 2 E. L. H.*) I do.

Mor. Sir, do you? Well, and what — where? Is she safe?

Joa. I hope so.

Mor. But where, sir, where?

Joa. (*Aside.*) 'Tis Mr. Cheveril's guardian! — (*To MORDENT.*) Why do you inquire?

Mor. For Heaven's sake, sir, do not torment me by delay, but tell me where she is!

Joa. I must not.

Mor. (*Seizing her arm.*) But, sir, I say you must and shall!

Joa. (*Firmly.*) Sir, you mistake if you suppose menaces can prevail.

Mor. Excuse me: I would give my right hand to know what it appears you can tell.

Joa. I can tell nothing, till I am first made acquainted with your true motives.

Mor. And will you inform me then?

Joa. Provided I am certain of their purity.

Mor. Know, then, that I pant for a sight of her once more, to do her the little justice that is yet in my power. Know, the wrongs she has received from me are irreparable, vile, such as could not have happened but in this worst of worlds. Know, that I, her natural guardian, have been her actual persecutor; that I drove her into the danger of infamy; that I almost became the agent of her ruin; and that when I knew the engines of darkness and hell were at work to insure her everlasting wretchedness, I then discovered (*shuddering with horror*) that she was my daughter!

Joa. Sir! your daughter! You — you her father? — you my father?

Mor. Yes, I.

Joa. (*Falling at his feet, and snatching his hand.*) My father!

Mor. Can it be? — My child — my Joanna! (*Eagerly raising and regarding her again.*) It is — it is! (*Falling on her neck.*)

Joa. My father!

Mor. My child! And innocent?

Joa. As your own wishes, or the word father should never have escaped my lips. This dress was the disguise conveyed to me, by which I effected my escape. I can suffer any thing but dishonor.

Mor. A father? O, I do not deserve thee — I do not deserve thee! (*Gazing rapturously on her.*) Once again let me fold thee to my heart!

Len. (*Without, at a distance, L.*) Zounds, sir!

Che. (*Without, L.*) I insist, sir!

Joa. I hear voices.

(*They retire, R.*)

Enter CHEVERIL and LENNOX, L. 2 E.

Che. O for swords, daggers, pistols, blunderbuses, and four-and-twenty pounders!

Mor. (*To JOANNA.*) This way!

(*Exeunt MORDENT and JOANNA, R. H. 3 E.*)

Len. Confound your impertinent freaks! they have stopped my mouth this half hour. I would have told you all I knew instantly, but for your insulting passion.

Che. Did not you say, you would not tell me where she is?

Len. I said, I could not.

Che. Why, there, now!

Len. But I suspect I can tell more at present, if you will but hear.

Che. 'Sdeath! then why don't you? Speak! why don't you speak?

Len. Will you be silent? I had a glimpse of Mordent this moment in conversation with a youth.

Che. Well.

Len. It was the identical dress I sent as a disguise to Joanna.

Che. How!

Len. And I suspect that very youth to be Joanna herself.

Che. (*Recollecting himself.*) Eh! how? By Heaven, and so it is! (*With anger and fear.*) In the possession of Mordent?

Len. Be patient: there is a secret — his claims supersede all others.

Che. His claims! By every power of heaven and hell —

Len. (*Catching his arm.*) Be patient, I tell you. She is his daughter.

Che. (*After a pause.*) Joanna — my sweet Joanna his daughter?

Len. Even so.

Che. His daughter? Hurrah! My dear Lennox! — (*Hugging him in his arms.*) Hurrah! O Lord! O Lord! (*In ecstasy.*) Hurrah! His daughter? Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah! (*Exeunt, L.*)

SCENE II. — *A Room in the House of MORDENT.*

Enter MORDENT and JOANNA, L. 1 E.

Mor. My dear girl, your rare endowments surpass my hopes; and, convinced as I am that beauty is destructive, and wisdom impotent, I joy to find you thus adorned.

Joa. Wait to know me better; I fear you would prize me above my worth.

Mor. How shall I reward it! Fool that I am! madman that I have been!

Joa. (*Rapturously kissing his hand.*) This is my rich reward!

Mor. I have told you in part my desperate situation. If Grime would but give honest evidence! but of that there is little hope.

Joa. My greatest fear arises from what you have said of Lady Anne. I must not, will not be the cause of separation.

Mor. Let me do her justice. Her errors have been of my own creation; I have spurned at the kindness I did not deserve; her forbearance at my conduct has been my astonishment and my torture.

Joa. O that I could see you reconciled! O that I could gain the love of such a lady!

Mor. Of that, sweet girl, you are certain. Lennox is with her, and by this she knows your story, and, I am sure, adores your virtue.

Lady A. (*Without, R.*) Where is she?

Mor. I hear her.

Enter LADY ANNE, R. 1 E.

Lady A. (*R. C.*) O, noble girl! (*Running and embracing JOANNA.*) Forgive this rude tumult of affection, which I cannot restrain.

Joa. (*C.*) Is it possible?

Lady A. Mr. Mordent, with such a child as this restored to your arms, and thus restored to yourself, you are a million fold more dear to me than ever.

Mor. (*L. C.*) I cannot bear it!

Lady A. Will you be my daughter, too? Dare ye own me for a mother, and find in my heart the affection of that one you have lost? Will you?

Joa. Adversity I could endure, but this unhop'd-for tide of blessings overpowers me.

Mor. O, how I hate myself!

Lady A. No, no — 'tis not yourself you hate; 'tis that life which never emanated from yourself. Be but the Mordent who first won my love, exert but the energies and feelings of your own heart, and you will find the power to be great and good.

Enter CHEVERIL, L. 1 E.

Che. (*Running to JOANNA.*) My life! my soul! my precious Joanna!

Mor. They will persuade me presently that happiness is possible. You have cause, child, to thank Mr. Cheveril.

Joa. O, yes; he has a heart of the noblest stamp.

Mor. Ay, every body's right! All angels except myself!

Che. Come, come, guardian, dismiss these sombre reflections; they have plagued you long enough. Clement is in eager search of you, to communicate secrets of the utmost importance concerning his uncle Item.

Mor. The villain!

Che. Yes, I hear him — he is below, half distracted, foaming with rage, and accusing every servant in the house with having stolen his book. Pray keep back, my sweet Joanna, but for a moment; and we may, perhaps, have evidence from his own lips. (*Exeunt, R.*)

Enter ITEM, C. D. F.

Item. (*Looking about eagerly.*) 'Tis gone — 'tis lost! I am undone — I am murdered — am betrayed! I shall be prosecuted, pilloried, fined, cast in damages, obliged to pay all, to refund all, to relinquish all! — all — all — all! — I'll hang myself! I'll drown myself! I'll cut my throat! Mordent has got it! all my secrets, all my projects, all my rogueries, past, present, and to come! O that I had never been born! O that —

Enter CLEMENT, L. 1 E.

Item. (*Running to him.*) Have you seen my book? — Give it to me! — Where's my book?

Cle. What book?

Item. My account book — my secrets — myself — my soul — my heart's blood! (*Seizing CLEMENT's coat lap, and searching.*) I have it! 'tis here! I feel it!

Cle. (*Disengaging himself.*) Yes, sir, 'tis here; be pacified.

Item. (*Assaulting him.*) I won't — I won't! I'll have it! — Give it me! — I'll swear a robbery — I'll have you hanged!

Cle. (*Taking a book, sealed up, out of his coat pocket.*) This book, sir, I consider as a sacred trust; and part with it to you I must not.

Item. You shall part with it, villain! you shall! (*Seizing him furiously.*) I'll have your soul! — 'tis mine! — I'll have your heart! — 'tis mine! I will have it! I will have it! I will have it!

Cle. (*Throwing him off.*) You shall have my heart, life, and soul first!

Item. (*Falling on his knees.*) My dear nephew — my good boy — my kind Clement! I'll supply all your wants! I'll pay all your debts! I'll never deny any thing you ask! I'll make you my heir! You shall marry my patron's daughter — possess her fortune! Now give it me — I'm sure you will!

Cle. You are the agent of Mr. Mordent, whom, I fear, you have deeply wronged. I have a painful duty to perform, but justice must be obeyed. Nothing must or shall bribe me to betray an injured man.

Item. I'll give you ten thousand pounds — I'll give you twenty — I'll give you fifty! Would you rob and ruin your uncle? — Would you put him in the pillory? — Would you see him hanged? (*Seizing him again.*) Villain! I will have it! — 'tis mine! I will — I will! Thieves! robbers! murder! fire!

Enter MORDENT, LADY ANNE, LENNOX, JOANNA, CHEVERIL, JONATHAN WINTER, and GRIME, R. 1 E.

Mor. (*Having received the book from CLEMENT.*) I am glad, Mr. Item, that your inattention, and your nephew's inflexible honesty, have afforded me the means of doing myself justice. This is all I require.

Len. Here is a double testimony — your handwriting and your agent.

Item. (*To GRIME.*) Have you impeached, then?

Grime. I am a villain, a rascal, a cutthroat!

Mor. You, Mr. Clement, and you, Winter, I know not how to repay.

Joa. (*To WINTER.*) My watchful guide! my never-failing friend!

Che. (*To WINTER, taking his hand.*) Your hand, old boy! you and I must settle accounts. I am I know not how many score pounds a year in your debt.

Mor. What, then, am I?

Joa. And I?

Win. If you wad pay old Jonathan Winter, it mustn't be wi' ye'er dirty money; no, no. It mun be wi' your affections.

Joa. True, my noble protector! (*Taking his hand, and kissing it fervently.*)

Win. Why, now, ay! that's a receipt in full; and it maks my heart gi' sic a bang, as it han't had sin' you war lost!

Mor. Honest, worthy soul! And now to reconcile —

Che. Come, come, make no speeches; I'll settle the business — I am the proper person. I have eight thousand a year, and ten thousand in my pocket. Ten! (*To ITEM.*) Is it ten or seventeen?

Item. Seventeen!

Joa. (*To ITEM.*) What, not a word for your pretty Joanna? not a word, Mr. Item, against the young whipper-snapper, and in favor of persons of your own age?

Item. (*Aside.*) Entrapped — betrayed in every quarter! The man whom I raised from squalid poverty; the nephew whom I have supported; the woman who — Ha! may the curses of Item mingle with their triumph! (*MORDENT gazes at him — his features turn from malevolence to obsequiousness.*) Mr. Mordent, don't be too hasty — don't condemn me unheard!

Mor. Away, serpent! betrayer of my dearest confidence! I cannot look on thee without horror, when I think on what might have been the consequences of your villany. Away!

Item. (*Aside, looking all round.*) No hopes from subterfuge. Then, law, I'll try thee! (*Exit, L.*)

Che. Good by, old Cent per Cent! waddle away like a lame duck from the Exchange, leaving behind you happiness above par, and roguery at a discount! Lennox, as a bachelor's penance, shall marry his housemaid. — (*To GRIME.*) You, old Moloch, go hang yourself! Joanna, my queen of the Green Park, you must be my wife; Mordent, you must be my father; Lady Anne, you must be my half mamma. Eight thousand a year shall settle scores with Clement and old Honesty here; so away with frowns, and welcome smiles — smiles that will never be wanting while we can reflect them from those where their appearance is most welcome!

GRIME.	WIN.	LEN.	JOA.	CHE.	LADY A.	MOR.	CLE.
R.]							[L.

CURTAIN.



THE MINOR DRAMA.

THE ACTING EDITION.

No. CXXXIX.

IS HE JEALOUS?

A FARCE, IN ONE ACT.

BY BEASELEY.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

A Description of the Costume---Cast of the Characters---Entrances and Exits -
Relative Positions of the Performers on the Stage, and
the whole of the Stage Business.

AS PERFORMED AT THE PRINCIPAL
ENGLISH AND AMERICAN THEATRES.

NEW-YORK:
SAMUEL FRENCH,
122 NASSAU STREET, (UP STAIRS.)

CAST OF THE CHARACTERS.—[Is He Jealous?]

	<i>Park, N. Y.,</i> 1830.	<i>Bowery, N. Y.,</i> 1857.	<i>California,</i>	<i>Walnut St.,</i> <i>Phila.,</i> 1831.	<i>Tremont, Bos-</i> <i>ton,</i> 1834.
BELMOUR, -	Mr. Simpson.	Mr. A. W. Fenno.	Mr. G. Chapman.	Mr. Flynn.	Mr. G. Barrett.
MRS. BELMOUR,	Mrs. Sharpe.	Miss Keough.	Miss Rivers.	Mrs. Charles.	Mrs. Smith.
HARRIET, -	Miss Clara Fisher.	Mrs. Rynar.	Mrs. G. Chapman.	Mrs. Flynn.	Mrs. Meader.
ROSE, - - -	Mrs. Vernon.	Mrs. Eddy.	_____	Mrs. La Forest.	Miss A. Fisher.

COSTUME.

MR. BELMOUR.—Morning gown, pants, and white vest. *Second dress*: Coat over morning gown.
 MRS. BELMOUR.—Lady's modern morning dress. HARRIET.—Frock coat, vest and pants.
Second dress: Lady's morning dress. ROSE.—A neat chintz.

IS HE JEALOUS?

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Drawing-Room in Belmour's House—a door leading to Belmour's study, R. F.—another, leading to Mrs. Belmour's boudoir, L. F.—a pianoforte—a sofa, c.—a light nearly expiring on the table—a window, looking into the street, L. S. E.—day-light.*

ROSE discovered sleeping upon the sofa, with her work in her hands.

Belmour. [*Ringing the bell, and calling from his study, R. F.*] Williams! Williams! Williams! I say!

Rose. [*Waking and gaping.*] Eh! what? my master calling? Why, it is day-light, as I'm alive, and my mistress not yet returned! Ah! if my master were awakened thus early by love instead of study!—But there he sits in that room among his musty old books, while he suffers my handsome mistress to spend all her time by herself in that pretty boudoir of hers, from which he can almost hear her sigh for him; yet they say he loves her.—Well, I can't think it, or he would never see with indifference the young and handsome Mr. Percival perpetually with her, at the theatre, balls, and every where.—Wrapped up in study, he seems to forget that even my mistress is flesh and blood. He defied her yesterday to make him jealous, and swore it was impossible he could ever be so. [*Gaping.*] Oh, lord! I am very sleepy!—While ladies are dancing away, they seldom think of their poor servants, who are sitting up for them at home.

[*Rising*

SONG.—ROSE.

Oh, would I were some lady bright,
To dance away the live long night,
Through pleasure's maze to roam!
In opera, ball, or masquerade,
Instead of lowly waiting-maid,
To gape away at home.

Oh, then, how gay to dance away
 To opera, ball, or crowded play,
 Deck'd out in gaudy clothes !
 To dance and shine so gay and fine,
 And make a thousand lovers pine
 To win the heart of Rose !
 While waltzing here, chasseeing there,
 'Twould be, " Was ever girl so fair,
 So fair and fine as Rose !"
 Partners pleasing—fingers squeezing
 Now poussetting, now coquetting ;
 Through fan spying, lovers sighing,—
 Was ever bliss so rare
 As waltzing here, chasseeing there ;
 While each one says, " No girl so fair,
 So fair and fine as Rose !"

Well, this is the first time my mistress has ever stayed out in this way, however ; perhaps she may at last give him cause to be jealous. Yes, yes, with the Argus eyes of a waiting-maid, I see how it will end : intrigue, plot—I see it all ! [*A noise heard in the study.*] Ah, he is coming ! I must not for the world let him know my mistress has been out all night.

Enter BELMOUR, R. D. F., with a volume in his hand.

*Bel. [Reading.] " Trifles, light as air,
 Are to the jealous confirmations strong
 As proofs of holy writ."*

This axiom is indeed a just censure upon the weakness of a jealous mind : and does Elizabeth suppose mine could ever admit of such a feeling ? Never !

Rose. [Aside.] Don't be too sure.

Bel. (R. c.) That husband is indeed deserving of pity, who, harbouring suspicion in his breast, turns an indefatigable Argus in his anxious watchings, and becomes the very shadow of his wife.

Rose. (c.) True, sir ; too much suspicion may offend our sex, but too great security is quite as displeasing to us, I assure you. The husband, whose jealousy would see every thing, exposes himself to the danger he fears ; but he who sees nothing, exposes himself still more. To speak plainly, sir, I think you play a hazardous game.

Bel. To any one but me, Rose, I confess, your opinion might be applicable ; but I know my Elizabeth : if she be occupied by gaieties, they are innocent ; she pursues them to amuse herself, not to deceive me. Ought I to transform the marriage ring into a chain of bondage ?

Rose. Certainly not, sir.

Bel. She always returns early, and quits the giddy throng with favourable dispositions towards the retirement of her own home. My friend Percival, who knows so well how to combine amusement with philosophy, always attends her.

Rose. [*Aside.*] Lord, lord ! was ever such a man !

Bel. May I wake your mistress, Rose ?

Rose. It is yet very early, sir ; my mistress was very tired last night, sir. Pardon me, sir, but I think she had better sleep a little longer, sir.

Bel. I will wait, then, till she rings.

Rose. [*Aside.*] You will wait some time, then, fancy.

Bel. No, no : a few hours spent in amusement, at her age, preserve and occupy the elasticity of youth ; and you, for such a trifle, would have me jealous ! I am as sure of my wife as I am of myself ; our love and confidence is mutual. She sleeps beyond her usual hour this morning ; I must steal silently to her pillow, and snatch one kiss from her rosy lips as she sleeps.

Rose. [*Stopping him.*] Oh no, sir, you had better not : my mistress was very tired when she went to bed—she was, indeed, sir ; and, besides, she had a—a——

Bel. Well, well ; I will not disturb her.

Rose. [*Aside.*] Thank heaven !

Bel. I will occupy myself till she awakes with this problem, which Percival has given me to solve ; he has found it too difficult. [*Sits, and reads*

Rose. [*Aside.*] Lord, lord ! I wish he'd go ! [*Aloud.*] You'll be less interrupted in your study, sir.

Bel. No, no, I am very well here ; be quiet.

Rose. [*Aside.*] That he may occupy himself with his wife, Mr. Percival gives my master a more difficult problem to solve than woman ; while he—Oh, I see it all !—*[A noise of a carriage heard without—Rose looks out of the window, L.]* As I am alive, my mistress ! What shall I do now ? *[To Belmour, anxiously.]* You would be much better in your own room, sir—indeed you would !

Bel. No, no ; let me alone.

Rose. [*Aside.*] The devil take the problem ! My mistress will come in—all will be known ! Oh, I see it all ! [*Aloud.*] The servants will be wanting to clean the room, sir, and you'll be in the way. *[A knocking at the door, L.]*

Bel. Ah ! who can that be so early ?

Rose. [*Aside.*] I shall die of fright !

Bel. See who it is, Rose.

Rose. It's nobody, sir.

Bel. Oh, let him in.

Rose. 'Tis some mistake—some runaway knock, sir, most likely.

Bel. Look who it is, I say.

Rose. It is Mr. What's-his-name? — Mr.—Oh, lord! I've forgotten his name.

Bel. [*Rising and going towards the window, but is stopped by Rose.*] I must see myself, then.

[*Knocking heard again.*]

Rose. It is Mr. Percival, sir.

Bel. Ah, anxious about his problem, I suppose: he never suffers his pleasures to interrupt his studies. I am nearly ready for him. [*Knocking.*] I'll to my study for a pen. Quick! run and admit Mr. Percival; I will be with him in a few minutes. [*Exit into his study, R. D. F.*]

Rose. Thank heaven, he is gone!

Mrs. Belmour. [*Without, L.*] I believe you are right, Mr. Percival; I will follow your advice. Send her, therefore, the moment she arrives; make haste, or you'll be too late. Farewell!

Rose. Ah! she dismisses Mr. Percival in haste; she fears lest my master should see him. Oh, it is clear—I see it all! Poor Mr. Belmour!

Enter Mrs. BELMOUR, L.

Mrs. B. Why, all the men were asleep, I think. I knocked three times.

Rose. [*In a low tone.*] Hush, ma'am! speak lower.

Mrs. B. [*Loudly.*] Speak lower!—For what reason?

Rose. [*Pointing to the door of the study.*] My master is there, ma'am.

Mrs. B. Ah! in his study so early? What can engage such particular attention?

Rose. A problem, madam.

Mrs. B. He is a problem himself, I think. Do you know why he did not join me at Mrs. Wildishes' ball?

Rose. He was hard at work with his books.

Mrs. B. Books, books! nothing but books! They are his business, his pleasure, his every thing. Was he uneasy at my absence?

Rose. Not at all, ma'am.

Mrs. B. Did he sit up for me long?

Rose. Oh, no, ma'am; he went to bed at his usual hour.

Mrs. B. Heigho! what a strange mortal! Has he entered my apartment this morning?

Ross. [*Cunningly.*] Oh, no, ma'am: he wished it, but I knew how to hinder him.

Mrs. B. Hinder him!—And why should you hinder him?

Rose. [*Mysteriously.*] I told him you were asleep, ma'am.

Mrs. B. [*Loudly, and surprised.*] Asleep!

Rose. Yes yes: for heaven's sake, speak lower!

Mrs. B. What! I have passed the night out, and he does not even know of it?

Rose. No, madam; he has not the least idea of such a thing, I managed it so well.

Mrs. B. [*Angrily and proudly.*] And by what authority did you use this management? Did I order you to be silent? Know, for the future, that such conduct is in the highest degree displeasing to me; and, if you value my favour, you will never repeat it.

Rose. [*Aside.*] Was ever such ingratitude! [*Aloud.*] Lord, ma'am! I thought to oblige you by it.

Mrs. B. You have seriously offended me.

Rose. Ah, madam, pray pardon me; such an intention was the farthest from my thoughts, believe me.

Mrs. B. Remember, for the future, that nothing mysterious must ever attach itself to my conduct.

Rose. No, ma'am.

Mrs. B. Mystery implies guilt, and authorizes suspicion.

Rose. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. B. To atone for your fault, go instantly and tell Mr. Belcour that I am but this moment arrived. Do you hear me?

Rose. Ma'am!

Mrs. B. Obey me, then, instantly.

Rose. Yes, ma'am. [*Aside.*] Oh, lord! was ever such a woman? [*Exit angrily into the study, R. D. F.*]

Mrs. B. It is but too plain: neither to come to me, nor to wait for me! to sleep peaceably in my absence! to leave me a whole night besieged by a thousand coxcombs!—Free from all suspicion, and happy in his solitary pursuits, in his learned retreat he forgets his Elizabeth. Heigho! I can suffer it no longer: in cultivating the head, he forgets the heart. I must try and rouse him from this lethargy of indifference; yes, Percival, I will follow your advice—I will try him: my sister, who arrives this day,

will answer my purpose. Let me see what time she will be here. [*Taking out a letter, and reading it.*] "*At length, my dear Elizabeth, I have settled my late husband's affairs. I am free, am arrived in England, a young and not unhandsome widow. My old general, you know, was my father's choice; my next shall be my own. Obligated to travel alone on the Continent, where such things are not so uncommon as in our own prudent country, I have made my journey in disguise; and being yet unwilling to put off what are frequently the only attributes upon which the other sex claim their superiority, I will show you what a spruce beau your sister Harriet makes, before I resume my own clothes.*" Ah, spruce enough, my wild sister!—The very thing to play the part of a dangerous lover. [*Reading.*] "*I shall be at home on the 10th, early in the morning, where I shall expect you to welcome me—your sister Harriet.*" This is the very morning: Percival is gone to meet her, and explain our plan; and heaven grant that I may be made happy by making my husband jealous!

Re-enter ROSE, pushed out of the study door, R. F.

Rose. Was ever such madness!

Mrs. B. Well, Rose, is Mr. Belmour coming?

Rose. No, ma'am.

Mrs. B. Have you not told him I am waiting?

Rose. Oh, yes, ma'am; I told him often enough, and loud enough.

Mrs. B. Well!

Rose. His arms crossed, his head buried up to his ears in his shoulders, his eye fixed upon the Turkey carpet, he muttered some words in a low voice. For my part, I think he is possessed, and that it was the devil that spoke within him. "My mistress is arrived," says I—not a word. "She is waiting for you," says I again—still silent. "She is impatient to see you," cried I, as loud as I could bawl in his ear. He started up, looked terribly angry, seized me by the shoulders, shook the breath out of my body, banged me out of the room, and sat down quietly again to his mathematics, as though nothing had happened.

Mrs. B. This is too much!

Rose. I am sure, ma'am, my master is crazed.

Mrs. B. It is indeed time that I should attempt his cure.

[*A knocking at the door.*]

Rose. Ah! somebody knocks.

[Exit, L.

Mrs. B. It is my sister.

Re-enter ROSE, gaily, L.

Rose. La, ma'am! here's such a handsome young stranger asking for you, and impatient to see you.

Mrs. B. Show him in.

Rose. He is coming, ma'am. [Looking off, L.] Well, how genteel he is!

Harriet. [Speaking without, in a familiar but foppish tone of voice.] Up stairs?—Very well; I'll find her; don't trouble yourself, friend.

Mrs. B. Yes, 'tis she!

Enter HARRIET, in men's clothes, L.—She approaches to embrace Mrs. Belmour, who points to Rose—Harriet stops suddenly, and affects confusion and mystery.

Mrs. B. [After a pause.] Leave us, Rose.

Rose. [Without moving.] Yes, ma'am. [Aside.] Who can it be? Now I shall hear and see every thing.

Mrs. B. Leave us, I say; nor return to the drawing-room till I call you.

Rose. [Aside.] Dear, dear! I shall hear and see nothing! [Aloud.] Yes, ma'am. [Aside.] Oh, I see it all—my poor master! [Exit, L.

Mrs. B. At length, then, you are here; my heart is happy once more to embrace my dear Harriet; I was impatient to see you.

Har. Your impatience could not exceed mine: seas have divided us for years. I am an old campaigner, but, tired of the wars, I am returned with joy to my native country, and will inhabit no place which is not occupied by my charming sister.

Mrs. B. Well, then, let us to our project; time presses.

Har. Oh, I am quite au fait: Percival has told me your case, and I have undertaken the cure. A husband dare determine not to be jealous! We'll see—we'll try him, and be revenged! To be so indifferent within a year after marriage! it makes me burn with indignation. But first tell me—shall I do? have I the airs and graces of a pretty fellow—of such a fellow, now, as one of the thousand butterflies who flutter round married women, with no hope but that of making husbands uncomfortable, no triumph but making them jealous,—without any other motive than making themselves notorious, and often without

any other result than making themselves ridiculous?—Well, d'ye think I shall do?

Mrs. B. It is impossible to be better: the more I examine you, the more I doubt if I am really speaking to my sister Harriet.

Har. Let the enemy appear, then, and we will soon gain the victory. Where is he?

Mrs. B. As usual, in his study. Ah! he comes.

Enter BELMOUR from his study, R. D. F., with a paper in his hand, which he is reading—he appears animated with pleasure at having solved the problem, and passes before his wife and Harriet to the front, without seeing them.

Bel. At length it is solved: as A is to B, so is B to C.

Mrs. B. He is so wrapped up in his mathematics, that he has not even seen us.

Bel. And as B is to C, so is the square of A K. Yes, 'tis correct—quite correct!

Mrs. B. [*Advancing with Harriet towards Belmour.*] Mr Belmour!

Bel. [*Still reading the paper.*] Pardon me, my dear Elizabeth; I really did not perceive you. What is become of Percival?

Mrs. B. He accompanied me home, but departed instantly.

Bel. Gone! without his problem! I hope he will return presently. [*Contemplating his paper.*] What a complete solution!—So concise, yet so clear!

Mrs. B. [*Apart to Harriet.*] His brain is certainly turned.

Har. What a happy species of insanity! I should enjoy it in a husband of mine amazingly.

Mrs. B. And I am enraged at it.

Har. He pays me no more attention than if I were a piece of furniture. [*Advancing and bowing to Belmour.*] I have the honour, sir—

Mrs. B. [*Apart to Harriet.*] A little louder.

Har. I say, sir, I have the honour to see—

Bel. [*Still at his problem.*] What perception! what perspicuity!

Har. [*Laughing.*] Ha! ha!—He sees, he hears nothing! It was thus, I suppose, that Archimedes dreamed in Syracuse, while Marcellus took the city.

Mrs. B. Think rather of revenging me, than laughing at him.

Har. [*Approaching Belmour.*] Sir, I have the honour—

Bel. [*Starting.*] Ah! a stranger!

Mrs. B. It is a young and learned relation and friend of the family; he is just returned from his travels, and I thought you would be delighted to know him. He is come to England expressly to—to renew his acquaintance with me: knowing that, like yourself, he was fond of literature and science, I have anticipated your wishes by this introduction.

Bel. So young, and at an age when pleasure forms the general object of pursuit, does your friend already cultivate and cherish the nobler arts?

Mrs. B. Oh, yes; Hebrew, Greek, Algebra—every thing.

Bel. 'Tis well: he is your friend—he must be mine.

[*Offers his hand—Harriet takes Mrs. Belmour's.*]

Har. [*Kissing Mrs. Belmour's hand.*] Ah, sir, you must permit me, on the hand of your charming lady, to thank her for her unmerited eulogy.

Bel. [*Waiting till Harriet has done kissing Mrs. Belmour's hand, which she does several times.*] Sir, I really beg your pardon, but—

Har. [*With a careless, foppish air.*] You see I treat Elizabeth without any ceremony. Educated together under the same roof, we have contracted these little habits of intimacy; they go no farther, I assure you; they need not make you uneasy—oh dear, no, not at all; need they, Elizabeth? [*Looking and smiling at Mrs. Belmour, who smiles in return, while Belmour gradually assumes an appearance of surprise.*] Don't you observe some resemblance between us—something analogous to fraternity?—It is sympathy, all sympathy, I assure you—downright legitimate sympathy. In my travels, I could think of nothing, amidst the variety by which I was surrounded, but Elizabeth; my tender friendship decorated every landscape in imagination with her sylph-like form. [*Mrs. Belmour smiles.*] Ah! what a modest blush suffuses her lovely cheek!—What a charming smile plays around the dimples of her lips! The rose, caressed by the morning zephyr, is not more sweet, more fresh!

SONG.—HARRIET.

Nature, with her fairy finger,
Never gave the blushing rose
Tints so warm as those which linger
Where thy lovely cheeks repose.

Toiling slaves, of freedom dreaming,
 Never drew from eastern mine
 Diamonds half so brightly beaming,
 As those sparkling eyes of thine.

Mrs. B. [*Coquettishly.*] Ah ! now you flatter me !

Bel. [*Aside.*] Am I awake ?

Har. To find modesty thus united with beauty, is indeed a rarity. Upon my faith, I see London is the place at last to form the complete woman ; for, without compliment, I find you amazingly improved since you have quitted our shades of rustic retirement. It is a year, I think, since we were used to wander through the groves, to listen to the tender nightingale ; yes, a year since, when, enraged at your departure, I quitted home within an hour after you left the village. Your absence deprived it of every attraction. Since that period, I have trod upon classic ground ; contemplated the triumphal arches of Roman conquerors, and wept upon the tomb of Virgil ; marched with a bounding heart over the plains of Marathon, and pondered with a bleeding one upon the rock so fatal to the tender Sappho. The capitals of Europe have, by turns, been my residence ; men of literature, and women of beauty and wit, have been my companions ; but I have traversed the world in vain to find so many charms and delights as are concentrated here.

Bel. Since London, sir, possesses your favourable opinion, perhaps it is your intention to settle among us, sir.

Har. A good guess—my project exactly. I never more shall quit the spot inhabited by Mrs. Belmour.

[*Smiles with Mrs. Belmour.*]

Bel. [*Aside.*] What does he mean ? Is this inexperience or folly, or merely an assumption of the levity of foreign manners ? I begin not to like him. [*Calling* Rose !

Enter ROSE, *running*, L.

Order the breakfast.

Rose. It is coming, sir.

Bel. [*To Harriet.*] You will, I trust, favour our breakfast-table with your company ?

Har. [*Giving his hat and gloves to Rose.*] To be sure I shall. Did you think I would not breakfast with you ?

Rose. [*Aside.*] Free and easy, however.

Enter SERVANTS, L.—*they lay the breakfast.*

Har. By the bye, I intend taking up my quarters in town,

at your friend Percival's; but really it is so crowded with Venuses, Apollos, Egyptian mummies, cauldrons, crucibles, and electrifying machines, that I fear there will be no room for me. I shall dread receiving an electric shock at the touch of every bell-pull, and shall expect to be embraced at every turn, by some of his spring-moving anatomies. So that, [*With nonchalance.*] if quite convenient, I shall be vastly happy to—take up—my—residence with—you—during my stay in town. [*A pause.*] Eh! Mis—ter Bel—mour?

Bel. [*Aside, but heard by Rose.*] What! make my house his home?

Rose. Lord, sir, there's no doubt of that. His carriage is already in the coach-house, his horses in the stable, and his servants in the attics.

Mrs. B. [*Apart to Harriet.*] To the life, my dear sister, to the life!

Bel. [*Aside.*] Ah, they whisper!—What new feeling is this? [*Aloud.*] Come, my love, the breakfast waits; your friend must need refreshment.

[*Mr. Belmour presents his hand to Mrs. Belmour—Harriet does the same—Mrs. Belmour hesitates, and then takes Harriet's—Belmour starts with surprise, and attempts to take a chair, which Harriet draws from him.*]

Har. [*Seating Mrs. Belmour, and taking her own seat at the head of the table.*] Come, Belmour—excuse my calling you Belmour; come, sit down. [*Belmour sits—Harriet makes the tea—his surprise increases.*] Now, sir, black or green? Mrs. Belmour, chocolate or coffee? Lord, you have no appetite, sir. You appear thoughtful, my lovely friend.

Mrs. B. I was thinking of the possibility of making your intended apartment agreeable.

Bel. [*Ironically.*] Really! Had your friend done me the honour to advise me of his intended visit, I should have done my best endeavours to have accommodated him; but as it is—

Har. Oh, never mind—never mind; you will not find me over scrupulous. The humblest apartment—[*To Mrs. Belmour.*]—near to you, madam, will be delightful; now that, for instance, or that, or the blue room.

Bel. [*Aside.*] Upon my word, he disposes of my house as though it were his own.

Mrs. B. You are amazingly good.

Rose. [*Aside.*] Amazingly !

Mrs. B. Will you indulge us with your society long ?

Bel. [*Aside.*] Oh, no doubt !

Har. Upon my honour, madam, my hopes of pleasure, while domesticated with you, are so great, that, with your permission, we will not anticipate a separation.

Rose. [*Aside.*] Lord help us ! what impudence !

Bel. [*Aside.*] But you are not yet domesticated, thank heaven !

Har. Then I shall, for the future, make your house my home ; give my cards of address here ; order my parcels to be directed here ; dine my friends here, and all that.—Upon my word, Belmour, you have such a way of putting one at one's ease, that I am as much at home already, as though I had been living here these twenty years.

Bel. [*Aside.*] Astonishing impertinence !

Rose. [*Aside.*] Oh, it is a settled thing ; my mistress is in the plot—I see it all !

Mrs. B. Come, sir, you are a great voyager, and have doubtless seen many things worthy of observation.

Har. Yes, madam, I have indeed seen much. In every country I have associated with the philosopher, as well as the courtier ; made love to the women, and raked with the men ; danced fandangos with the Spaniards, waltzed with the Germans, and cotillionized with the French ; and, at the end of a long and perilous pilgrimage in the pursuit of philosophy, I find that its best source is pleasure—that the best pleasure is woman ; and if you will listen to my dull finger on the piano, and my croaking voice will not disturb the meditations of Mr. Belmour, you shall hear my sentiments in a song.

Mrs. B. Oh, by all means. [*Goes to the piano with Harriet.*]

Har. [*After playing a prelude.*] Were my tongue to describe the sensations of my heart at the sound of this piano, it would say they arose because the keys were sometimes touched by the fair hand of Elizabeth.

Mrs. B. I play but little.

[*She seats herself by the side of Harriet—Belmour, who has been lost in thought, looks up, and appears troubled.*]

SONG.—HARRIET.

With study to fill up our leisure,
Let ancient philosophers preach ;
'Tis better to fill it with pleasure,
Both nature and sympathy teach.

Believe me, the man is mistaken,
Who in books only finds his delight
No study to pleasure can waken
Like studying eyes that are bright.

If by physiognomy learning,
The mind through the features to trace,
Grave brows of philosophers spurning,
I'd study in woman's sweet face.

If astronomy's wonders had charms, sir,
My stars shouldn't be in the sky ;
My Zodiac would be in her arms, sir,
My planets would beam in her eye.

Mrs. B. Delightful !

Rose. [*Aside.*] Ah, my mistress is pleased, and my master is enraged.

Mrs. B. The verses, too, are delightful !

Rose. [*Aside.*] My master thinks otherwise : he'll be jealous at last, thank heaven !

[*Exit with breakfast things, L.*]

Har. I am proud indeed of your approbation ; and if you will deign to assist me in my studies, I think I shall soon defy even Mr. Belmour himself to suppass me.

Mrs. B. There are many learned men whom I consider estimable ; but if they resemble you, they would indeed be irresistible.

Bel. [*Aside, starting.*] Ah, that observation was directed at me ! By heavens, she laughs at me !

Har. Mr. Belmour is ill, I fear ; he appears agitated.

Bel. [*With emotion.*] Agitated ! Oh, no—no, sir : it is impossible to be otherwise than agitated agreeably, sir, in your society.

Mrs. B. Oh, no ; it is his manner only : Mr. Belmour is generally so wrapped up in study, that outward objects are indifferent to him. He pursues the speculations of his own mind in society, and—[*Anxiously to Belmour.*] But you appear really ill, Mr. Belmour : perhaps—[*Inquiringly.*] perhaps you are jealous ?

Bel. Jealous ! I jealous, madam ? What, of a boy—of a boy ? No, no, madam !

Mrs. B. [*Coldly and disappointed.*] A boy ! Oh, in modern days, mauhood commences early. Look through society, who are our greatest libertines ? Your boys ! Who are the dangles after your demireps of fashion ? Your boys ? But, perhaps, [*Anxiously.*] you may have an objection to extend your hospitality so far as to admit my friend as an inmate.

Bel. [*Aside.*] I must hide these feelings, and appear tranquil. [*Aloud.*] Oh, no, madam, quite the contrary; I shall be happy—very—ha—happy in his society.

Mrs. B. [*To Harriet, disappointedly.*] Ah, he consents to it.

Har. So much the better.

Mrs. B. But he is not jealous.

Har. Hush! he observes us.

Bel. [*Aside.*] Yes, yes, 'tis plain: there is some mystery, some plot, some—surely I'm not jealous!

Har. [*To Mrs. Belmour.*] He begins to be uneasy; I see the first symptoms.

Bel. [*Aside.*] And I am to admit him as an inmate, too!

Har. [*To Mrs. Belmour.*] Courage! The symptoms redouble; he talks to himself.

Bel. [*Aside.*] I must be satisfied; I will interrogate Percival. [*Aloud.*] You have known my friend Percival for some time?

Har. Oh, yes, from infancy.

Bel. He conducted you here?

Har. Oh, no; he was too much immersed in some philosophical experiment—the decomposition of some mineral fluid. By the by—I beg ten thousand pardons, but he desired me to say, that he was anxiously waiting your assistance in the solution of some problem: you had better go.

Bel. Yes, true. You say he expects me? I will go. [*Aside.*] Shall I leave them together?

Mrs. B. You will not be very long, I suppose, Mr. Belmour?

Bel. [*Aside.*] Ah! she wishes me gone: she wants to ascertain the moment of my return; but I am not jealous! [*Aloud.*] Perhaps you will accompany me, sir?

[*Anxiously trying to take Harriet with him.*]

Har. No, no, I am obliged to you; I am vastly well here—use no ceremony with me, I beg. Your Elizabeth will find me entertainment; you'd better go; don't let me detain you from your friend.

Bel. [*Aside.*] Impudence!—Elizabeth!—But I am not jealous! Yes, I will go, but will return and surprise them. [*Aloud.*] Your pardon for leaving you, but—
[*Aside.*] Jealous!—Ridiculous!—Yet 'tis very odd, all this!

Har. Oh, never mind—good morning! You had better make haste, or the fluid will be decomposed, and the experiment over before your arrival. Good morning.

Bel. [*Aside.*] The coxcomb turns me out of my own house!—I am thunderstruck!—But as to jealousy, that's too absurd an idea. Psha! nonsense!—I am *not* jealous!

[*Exit L., but returns in a minute, and looks at Harriet and Mrs. Belmour.*]

Har. Well!

Bel. Well!

Mrs. B. Are you come back for any thing?

Bel. Yes; I am come back for—I am come back—
[*Aside.*] I am not jealous! [*Exit, hastily, L.*]

Mrs. B. You see it is of no use: he departs—he leaves us together! Such coldness, such indifference irritates me more than I can express. After having absolutely roused his suspicions, to leave us thus tête-a-tête is unbearable!

Har. Curious enough, to be sure! There are many women, I fear, who would be delighted with so easy a husband.

Mrs. B. 'Tis plain he loves me not.

Har. I am not so certain of that yet.

Mrs. B. What more can I do to prove it?

Har. Stop! an idea strikes me: if I recollect right, your boudoir is so sacred to yourself, that even he is seldom admitted.

Mrs. B. True.

Har. We will enter it, and remain there till his return. If that does not rouse his jealousy, he is incorrigible, and I give him up.

Mrs. B. [*Alarmed.*] I fear we shall go too far!

Har. 'Tis desperate, but the only means left; and, the better to deceive him, we will bribe your servant.

Mrs. B. I tremble!

Har. Nonsense! it must be done; [*Looking off, L.*] and I see Rose coming.

[*Harriet kisses Mrs. Belmour's hand ardently.*]

Enter ROSE, L., and goes up.

Har. Oh, how sweet are such moments as these! They are worth the rest of our lives!

Rose. [*Aside.*] Can I believe my eyes?

Har. [*Feigning surprise.*] Ah! we are observed! So much the better. Now place her quickly as a sentinel.

Mrs. B. [*Hesitating.*] Rose!

Rose. [*Coming forward.*] Ma—a—m!

Mrs. B. [*Still hesitating.*] Rose!

Har. Come, come, courage!

Mrs. B. Is Mr. Belmour gone out, Rose?

Rose. Oh, yes, ma'am; he is already in the next street. He went out in such haste, he forgot to take off his dressing gown. [*Aside.*] What can all this mean?

Mrs. B. Do you think he will be long absent?

Rose. No doubt, ma'am: he is gone about his philosophy business.

Mrs. B. True, true, Rose; I know your prudence; I can depend on your fidelity.

Rose. Oh, yes, ma'am, that you may. [*Aside.*] I do see it all now.

Mrs. B. I know it, dear Rose.

Rose. [*Aside.*] Dear Rose! Oh, I can be useful here!

Mrs. B. My friend wishes much to see the drawings, which he well remembers to have made when we were children: they are in the boudoir.

Rose. [*Aside.*] The boudoir! [*Aloud.*] Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. B. I wish to show them to him without—without the danger of interruption.

Rose. Yes, ma'am. [*Aside.*] Oh, lord! I see it all!

Mrs. B. You, my good Rose, stay here, and prevent any body from—from—

Har. You understand, my good Rose. Now, mind, guard your post well; be vigilant, and, above all, be discreet. [*Gives her a purse.*]

Rose. Yes, yes, sir. [*Aside.*] Well, was ever—[*Aloud.*] But my master, madam, should he return—

Mrs. B. Your master!

Har. Detain him here: we would not be interrupted for the world by him; that would be vastly unpleasant!

Rose. [*Aside.*] Well, I am absolutely astounded!

Har. Now, my lovely Elizabeth, the pictures!

[*Exeunt Harriet and Mrs. Belmour into the boudoir,*

L. D. F.

Rose. His lovely Elizabeth!—Lord! lord!—Well, I never was so surprised!—Lord! I do believe they've locked the door! Oh, 'tis plain—'tis clear! Poor Mr. Belmour! poor Mr. Philosopher!—Well, I can scarcely believe my eyes, nor my ears, nor my tongue. [*Looking off, L.*] Eh! what's that? who is coming?—My master, as I'm alive!—I shall die of fright!

Re-enter BELMOUR, extremely agitated. L.

Bel. Known and loved each other from infancy!—Ten-

derness unabated!—Constancy unequalled!—Would not introduce him himself, and coming to put me on my guard!

Rose. [*Aside.*] What do I hear?

Bel. Yes, yes, 'tis evident he is still beloved—that I am deceived! Oh, agonies till now unknown!—What shall I do? where fly? how revenge?—I'll smother him! [*Calling.*] Rose! Rose!

Rose. Here, sir. [*Aside.*] Lord! I'm in such a tremble!

Bel. Come near; [*Passionately.*] come near, I say!

Rose. [*Trembling.*] Ye—e—es, sir.

Bel. Where is your mistress?

Rose. [*Hesitatingly.*] Who—o—o—o, sir?—My mistress—

Bel. Answers me instantly—where is she?

Rose. She is, sir—she is, sir—in the bou—bou—boudoir, sir.

Bel. [*Approaching the door, L. F.*] Ah!

Rose. [*Stopping him.*] Sir, my mistress, sir—my mistress—

Bel. Well!

Rose. Desired not to be interrupted, sir.

Bel. Ah! a mystery!—And this friend—this new comer, where is he? [*Passionately.*] Where is this cockcomb, I say?

Rose. Coc—oc—oc—oc—xcomb, sir!

Bel. Your mistress's new friend—my would-be visitor; where is he?—Answer me, or—

Rose. [*Terrified.*] I will—I will, sir; but I'm afraid you'll be angry, sir.

Bel. [*Restraining himself with difficulty.*] No, no, I am quite—quite cool. Speak, speak!

Rose. He is—with my lady, sir.

Bel. [*Almost breathless.*] What! in the bou—bou—boudoir?

Rose. Ye—e—s, sir.

Bel. Incredible audacity! But I will confound them. [*Going to the boudoir door.*] Ah! the door locked!—This is too much: heaven grant me patience! Stand aside—stand aside, I say!—I will enter.

[*Pushes Rose aside, then rushes to the door, which opens, and discovers Mrs. Belmour and Harriet, who re-enter—Belmour starts, and regards them with fury.*]

Mrs. B. Ah! my husband! Fly, my friend!

Har. [*With nonchalance.*] Fly!—What, run away?—No, no: his presence is not quite so redoubtable.

Bel. He adds insult to outrage!

Rose. For heaven's sake, leave her, sir!—His anger will drive him to some act of violence.

Har. Oh, never fear: this is not the first time I have had to encounter a jealous husband.

Rose. [*Aside.*] There'll be murder—I see it all!

Bel. Quit the house, sir, instantly! quit the roof whose hospitality you have violated! I shall seek you at Percival's, and you know what must follow.

Har. What, quit Elizabeth!—No, no; you will ill-treat her: besides, why should you be so unreasonable as to separate us?

Rose. [*Aside.*] Lord! I tremble with fright at his impudence!

Bel. Quit the house instantly, that my own floors may not be stained with the blood my vengeance calls for!

Har. Well, since you are at present a little warm——

Bel. A little warm! [*Aside.*] A little devil! [*Aloud.*] Quit my sight—quit my sight, I say! lest my house prove no longer a protection to its inmate.

Har. Don't go too far, Mr. Belmour.

Rose. [*Dragging off Harriet.*] Oh, come, sir; for heaven's sake, leave him!—He is jealous.

[*She continues to draw Harriet off during the following trio.*]

TRIO.—HARRIET, ROSE, and BELMOUR.

Har. Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Bel. With fury my bosom's enraged.

Har. I'll return when your anger is pass'd;

Mrs. B., you'll be then disengag'd.

Har. & } Ha! ha! ha!

Rose. } Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Bel. } I shall murder the fellow at last!

Bel. Quit my sight—let me see him no longer!

Har. Dearest madam, pray pinion him fast.

Bel. Than reason my passion is stronger.

Har. Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Har. & } Ha! ha! ha!

Rose. } Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Bel. } I shall murder the fellow at last!

Har. Ah! now should you tell us

You'll never be jealous,

Such principles we will refute;

For evil's the hour

When man dares the power

Of woman supreme to dispute!

Bel. Quit my sight—let me see him no longer!

Har. Dearest madam, pray pinion him fast

Bel. Than reason my passion is stronger.

Har. Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Har. & } Ha! ha! ha!

Rose. } Poor man, he is jealous at last!

Bel. I shall murder the fellow at last!

[Exeunt Rose and Harriet, R.—Belmour falls into a chair.]

Mrs. B. [Aside.] Ah, I triumph!—My doubts of his love are dissipated. He is enraged, and I begin to be happy. *[Turning to her husband.]* Belmour—

Bel. [Rising.] Speak not a word!—Adieu, adieu, for ever! *[Going.]*

Mrs. B. Will you not listen to me? One word will restore you to tranquillity: you are deceived!

Bel. Deceived!—True; I am deceived—wretchedly, miserably deceived!—But I will be revenged!—Leave me, madam! quit my sight for ever! Your minion paramour shall pay with his life the forfeit of your mutual guilt; while you shall linger on your miserable existence despised by all, an outcast from society!

Mrs. B. Nay, nay, whence comes this blind ungovernable fury?—Where is your philosophy?

Bel. [After a pause, in an agony of passion.] I am jealous!

Mrs. B. [Joyfully.] Then I am loved and happy!

Bel. Happy!

Mrs. B. Yes, Belmour: did you know the happiness these transports occasion me, you would have been jealous long—long before.

Bel. Yes, madam, but I was deceived by your appearances of virtue—deluded by your expressions of affection. But I have discovered all: this friend, this cousin—(the devil cozen him!)—was always beloved by you—always preferred: opportunity was only wanting to complete my dishonour! But vengeance shall fall upon the devoted head—

Re-enter HARRIET, in an elegant satin dress, and ROSE, R.

Har. Of your humble servant, I suppose.

Bel. What do I see?

Mrs. B. My sister Harriet, whom you have often wished as a companion to your Elizabeth. Can you forgive me the deceit? *[They all laugh at Belmour.]*

Bel. A woman—a real woman?

Har. Yes, sir, a true woman, upon my honour.

Rose. I answer for that, sir.

Har. I suppose you will now consent a little more cheerfully to my abode here. 'Twas but a ruse de marriage, to revenge my sister for your indifference: let it be a lesson for you not to defy the power of our sex to make even a philosopher jealous.

Bel. I see it is not enough to love—we must also show our affection. Like other philosophers, I confess your fascinating power; but beware how you use it wantonly, lest the heart which you would only bend should break.

FINALE.

MRS. BELMOUR, HARRIET, *and* ROSE.

Then learn ye from this, each indifferent spouse,
'Tis in vain of your passion to tell us;
We ne'er can believe in the truth of your vows,
If our charms cannot render you jealous.

BELMOUR.

Then learn ye from this, each indifferent spouse,
What the women determine to tell us;
They ne'er can believe in the truth of our vows,
If their charms cannot render us jealous.

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

HARRIET.	MRS. B.	BEL.	ROSE.
R.]			[L.

THE END.

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